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SAMBALPUR.

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BENGAL DISTRICT GAZETTEERS.

SAMBALPUR.

BY

L. S. S. O'MALLEY,

INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE.

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PREFACE.

I desire to acknowledge my obligations to the Report on the Land Revenue Settlement of the Sambalpur District (1906) by Mr. F. Dewar, I.C.S., which has been freely laid under contribution for the compilation of this volume. I beg also to express my thanks to Mr. A. N. Moberly, I.C.S., Deputy Commissioner of Sambalpur, for assistance in revising the drafts and supplying materials.

L. S. S. O'M.

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GAZETTEER

OF THE

SAMBALPUR DISTRICT.

CHAPTER I.

PHYSICAL ASPECTS.

THE district of Sambalpur, the westernmost district of the Orissa Division, lies between 20° 44′ and 22° 4′ north latitude and between 82° 39′ and 84° 23′ east longitude. It contains an area of 3,824 square miles, and has a population of 638,992 persons according to the census of 1901. Formerly the district formed part of the Chhattīsgarh Division of the Central Provinces and had an area of 4,960 square miles with a population of 829,698 persons; but in October 1905 it was transferred to the Province of Bengal with the exception of the Phuljhar zamīndāri and the Chandarpur-Padampur and Mālkharodā estates, with an aggregate area of 1,136 square miles, which were attached to the Raipur and Bilāspur districts of the Central Provinces. GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

For administrative purposes the district is divided into two subdivisions, Sambalpur and Bargarh, with an area of 1,599 and 2,225 square miles respectively. They are called locally Uttartīr and Dakshintīr, *i.e.*, the northern and southern tracts, with reference to their position north and south of the river Mahānadī. Another administrative division is that of *khālsa* and zamīndāris, the former consisting of the area held by village headmen direct from Government and the latter of estates held by intermediary proprietors. The principal town, and administrative headquarters, is Sambalpur, situated on the Mahānadī in 21° 28′ N. and 83° 58′ E. The town is named after its tutelary goddess Samlāi, who was installed here when it was founded; and local tradition asserts that this name is derived from the fact that a cotton tree (*simul*) grew at the place where her image was set up.

Boundaries.

Sambalpur is bounded on the west by the district of Raipur and on the north-west by the Feudatory State of Sārangarh, on the north and north-east by the Gāngpur State, and on the south-east and south by the States of Bāmra, Rairākhol, Sonpur and Pātnā.

General configuration.

The district consists of a wide expanse of fairly open country fringed by forest-clad hills on the west, north and east, and intersected by the river Mahānadī. Speaking broadly, it is an undulating upland tract, the general slope of which is from north to south; but it is much broken up by rugged ranges of hills, and is traversed in all directions by drainage channels leading from the hill ranges to the Mahānadī. Isolated hills rising abruptly from the plain are also common, and a considerable area consists of ground cut up by ravines or broad sandy ridges. The elevation of the plains portion falls from nearly 750 feet on the north to 479 feet at Sambalpur.

One of the most prominent natural features of the district is the river Mahānadī. It flows through it in a great curve from north-west to south-east, and forms the boundary between the two subdivisions, with the exception of a small group of villages on its eastern bank, which are comprised withint he Sambalpur subdivision. To the east lies the whole of the Bargarh subdivision, the greater portion of which is an open plain, of great natural fertility, under close cultivation. The jungle has been almost completely cleared, little being left but mango, *mahuā* and other fruit trees, with small patches here and there of all but useless scrub-wood. In spite of denudation, this part of the country is very picturesque, especially if seen from a slight elevation, when it has the appearance of a vast park. To the north of this plain is a range of hills known as the Bārapahār range, and to the south-west, in the Borāsāmbar zamīndāri, are other long ranges and the valley of the Ang river. To the west of the Mahānadī lies the Sambalpur subdivision, which is traversed by the Ib river, is cut up by numerous hill ranges and isolated peaks, and has forests scattered over the north, south and east.

Next to the Mahānadī the most prominent natural feature consists of the Bārapahār range of hills, which forms not only a distinct watershed, but also an important geographical and ethnological boundary between Sambalpur and Chhattīsgarh. Chhattīsgarh has a Hindī-speaking people, while Sambalpur has an Oriyā population; and the black soil which is so marked a feature in Raipur and Bilāspur is almost wholly absent, giving place to a light sandy soil.

Natural divisions.

There are four minor natural divisions with different physical features, viz., (1) the Bargarh plain, (2) Borāsāmbar, (3) Ambābhonā and Lakhanpur, and (4) the Sambalpur *tahsīl*.

The Bargarh plain consists of an undulating tract of country sloping from the foot of the Bārapahār hills on the north to the borders of the Sonpur and Pātnā States on the south. It is drained chiefly by the Dantā and Jīrā rivers, which flow obliquely across it from north-west to south-east until they join the Mahānadī. They and their tributaries are mere drainage channels deeply cut in the sandy soil, and for seven months in the year have an attenuated stream, but come down in sudden floods during the rains. As recently as 30 years ago there were extensive areas under forest in the west of this plain, while patches of jungle occupied the higher ridges, but these have now disappeared. Much of the forest land has been brought under cultivation, but most of the surface is too high or too broken for tillage, and large areas now lie idle. The country is nowhere bare of vegetation, however, and the villages are deeply embowered in palm and mango groves.

The second tract, Borāsāmbar, lies to the south-west of the Bargarh plain. It is bounded by high hills on the north and south, and the intervening plain is drained by the Ang river, which rises in the south-west, describes a great semi-circle to the north, and then runs eastward in a widening valley. Ambābhonā and Lakhanpur lie to the north-west of the Bargarh subdivision and are cut off from the rest of the district by the Bārapahār range. The former is a fairly level tract sloping down from the hills to the river Mahānadī, and is under close cultivation. Lakhanpur is a wide valley surrounded by forest-clad hills and also closely cultivated, but the jurisdiction of the outpost includes some villages along the bank of the Mahānadī and others which are mere forest clearings. The Sambalpur *tahsīl* occupies the remainder of the district, and here the villages are found along the banks of the Mahānadī river, in the valley of the Ib river, and in the valleys and glens in the Garh Loisingh and Jujumāra zamīndāris to the south. Hills and forests are scattered over a considerable area, but rice cultivation is steadily extending as Hindu cultivators are spreading fast into the hill and forest villages.

HILL SYSTEM.

The main hill ranges are contained in the Bargarh subdivision, the largest being the Bārapahār (literally the 12 hills), which is practically a succession of ranges covering an area of over 300 square miles. They attain a height of 2,267 feet at Debrigarh and are covered with jungle, but scattered here and there are small villages with a fringe of cultivation; most of the villages, however, have now been acquired by the Forest Department. Historically, these hills are of interest, as they were the

stronghold of the insurgents in the rebellion of 1857. The main portion of the range is situated in the north-west of the Bargarh subdivision, where it separates Ambābhonā and Lakhanpur from the rest of the district. To the east of the Mahānadī it is continued in a long chain, which gradually decreases in height till it crosses into the Gāngpur State. To the south-west an outlying ridge projects for about 30 miles as far as the Singhorā pass, just beyond the border of the district, where the Sambalpur-Raipur road winds through it. This pass has been the scene of many an action between the predatory Gonds of Phuljhar and their more civilized assailants; and in 1857 the British troops had to fight their way through it on three successive occasions when marching to the relief of Sambalpur. On the south-eastern boundary of the subdivision, a few miles west of the Mahānadī river, there is another small range, which rises to a height of 1,287 feet in a peak 6 miles due west of Sambalpur.

The second group of hills is found in the Borāsāmbar zamīndāri. Along the southern boundary a well-defined range separates it from the Pātnā State. The range, which is known as the Gandamardan range, averages 2,000 to 3,000 feet in height and reaches its highest point (3,234 feet) in the hill above Narsinghnāth, one of the most picturesque places in the district, with a stream falling in cascades down a steep hillside. From this range another branches off to the west of Narsinghnāth, running first north and then north-east to near Jagdalpur, where it is broken by the Ang river. It next runs eastwards to Tāl, and then to the north-east, forming the boundary between this district and Phuljhar, until it reaches Sārangarh at the point of trijunction. There are also several isolated hills of no great size in the zamīndāri.

In the Sambalpur subdivision one of the principal ranges is that of Jhārghāti, which crosses the Rānchī road some 20 miles north of Sambalpur near the Rengāli railway station. Its highest point is 1,693 feet above the plain, and, like the Bārapahār range, it was one of the rebel strongholds in the rising of 1857. To the south are a succession of broken ranges running parallel with the Mahānadī, which rise to 1,563 feet at Mundher and to 2,331 feet at Bodhāpāli in the Loisingh zamīndāri. There are a number of other small ranges and isolated hills scattered over the subdivision. Among these may be mentioned a range running south-east from Sunāri (a village 20 miles north-west of Sambalpur), the highest point of which is 1,549 feet above sea-level, and two hills close to one another, about 10 miles north-west of Sambalpur, called the Gotwaki and Gujā hills, with a height

of 1,158 and 1,264 feet respectively. Another high hill is that called Mandobanj (1,403 feet) in the range west of Rengāli, which in the subsequent account of the geology of the district is called the Katarbagā range from the village of that name to the north. A noticeable feature of the hill system is the absence of the flat-topped trap hills which are so common to the north and west.

The district forms part of the central basin of the Mahānadī, which traverses it from north-west to south-east for a distance of nearly 90 miles. The other rivers are of minor importance, being mainly tributaries of the Mahānadī, such as the Ib, Jīrā and Dantā. The following is a brief account of the principal rivers. **RIVER SYSTEM.**

The Mahānadī enters the district in the extreme north-east of the Bargarh subdivision and for some distance flows to the east forming the boundary between it and the Padampur zamīndāri. A few miles north of Murā it takes a south-easterly direction, separating the Sambalpur and Bargarh subdivisions, and 12 miles north of Sambalpur is joined by the Ib flowing from the north-east. After receiving this tributary, it describes a wide curve and turns due south, flowing into the Sonpur State, a few miles below Dhāmā. **Mahānadī.**

Throughout its course in this district the Mahānadī is a river of the first magnitude, having a breadth of more than a mile in flood time, when it brings down a vast sheet of muddy water, overflowing its submerged banks and carrying with it boughs, trunks of trees, and occasionally the corpses of men and animals. For eight months in the year, however, it is nothing more than a narrow and shallow channel winding through a wide expanse of sand. In the upper portion of its course its bed is open and sandy, with banks usually low, bare and unattractive; but near Padampur it enters a series of rocks, which crop up all over its bed and split it into streamlets for several miles, thereby rendering it, if not unnavigable, at least very difficult of navigation. Further down its course is broken by rapids in several places, until it reaches Sambalpur. There its course is less obstructed, but it is occasionally interrupted by great rocks, which have been described as "the terror of boatmen—standing up in mid-stream and realising the exact notion of Scylla and Charybdis."* At Kansumrā six miles below Sambalpur there are dangerous rapids, in which one or two boats are wrecked every year.

In spite of rocks and rapids, boats can ascend the river, and before the construction of the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway it was the

* Sir C. Grant, *Central Provinces Gazetteer*, Nāgpur, 1870.

main outlet for the produce of the district, which was carried in boats to Cuttack, salt, cloth and other commodities being brought back in exchange. The through traffic has now, however, been almost entirely appropriated by the railway, and there remains only a small amount of local trade between Sambalpur and Sonpur. At Sambalpur the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway maintains during the dry season a pontoon bridge, which gives place to a ferry in the monsoon months. Here a magnificent view is obtained for several miles up and down the river, its breadth being nearly doubled at the centre of a large curve below the town.

Ib. The principal tributary of the Mahānadī in this district is the Ib, which enters Sambalpur from the Gāngpur State in the north. It flows past the Rājpur zamīndāri, pursuing a southerly course as far as Mangalpur, where it takes a sharp turn to the west, falling into the Mahānadī near Baghrā. Its principal tributary is the Bheran (or Bonam) river, which flows from the Bāmra State to the east and joins it near Rāmpur.

Tributaries of the Mahānadī. There are also a number of minor tributaries, of which the most important on the east are the Māltijor, Harad and Jamli. The Māltijor rises near the boundary between Sambalpur and Rairākhol on the south-east, and for some distance divides the district from the Bāmra State. It then pursues a circuitous course to the west and south-west, till it falls into the Mahānadī some 4 miles south of Sambalpur. The Harad flows from the north-east and also joins the Mahānadī close to Sambalpur; while the Jamli traverses the southern portion of the headquarters subdivision and debouches in the Mahānadī at Humā.

To the west the principal tributaries of the Mahānadī are the Jīrā and Jonk, which flow through the Bargarh plain and join the main river in the extreme south of the district. The Jīrā has a main tributary, the Dantā, which joins it a few miles north of its confluence with the Mahānadī.

Ang. The only other river calling for separate mention is the Ang, which rises in the Khariār zamīndāri and enters Borāsāmbar at its extreme south-west corner. It flows through it in a wide semicircle from west to east, and leaves the district a few miles to the east of Gaisilāt, eventually joining the Mahānadī in the Sonpur State.

GEOLOGY. Alluvium and laterite. The geology of the district presents several interesting features.* There is no alluvial plain like that found in Orissa or Lower Bengal, and though alluvium occurs in the vicinity of the rivers, it is much mixed up with local rock-debris. High laterite

* *See* V. Ball's *Mahānadī Basin and its Vicinity*, Records, Geo. Surv. Ind., Vol. X, pp. 167-186.

caps the summit of the Gandamardan range on the borders of Borāsāmbar and Pātnā, which rises 2,000 to 3,000 feet above the general level of the country, and from its altitude and flat plateau top presents a striking appearance when seen from a few miles distance. Examination has shown that the range consists of garnetiferous and ferruginous gneiss with a cap of about 100 feet of laterite, the summit being a flat plain with sparse vegetation like the Mainpāt in Sirguja. It forms an excellent store-house for water and is the source of several perennial springs.

Gondwāna rocks. The Gondwāna series is fairly well represented in the north of the district. The uppermost bed, the Kāmthi, occurs at Rājpur, and is a continuation of the Hingīr-Raigarh bed; it contains a few fossils, viz., two kinds of equisetaceae and six or seven kinds of ferns. Below Rājpur at Rāmpur appears the middle bed, the Barākar, in which carbonaceous shales with good coal exist. Economically this is important, and facility of communication is provided by the Ib river and the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway. From the coal fields, the lowest bed, the Tālcher, is prolonged south-east to the Brāhmanī river in Rairākhol for about 36 miles. This prolongation is evidently the remnant of an ancient valley, which was probably narrower and of a more defined character during the Tālcher period than at present. Outliers of Tālcher rocks are also found at Taldi on the Ib, at Rasem opposite the junction of the Ib with the Mahānadī, and near Gaisilāt on the Pāljor, a tributary of the Ang river. The Tālcher rocks usually consist of sandstones, shales and boulder-beds, resting directly on the gneiss.

Lower Vindhyan. The Lower Vindhyan series occupies a larger area, stretching from about 13 miles west of Sambalpur town, along the district boundary north-west and south-west, and being continued beyond into the great Chhattīsgarh basin, of which indeed it forms a part. The lowest beds seen are of sandstones, resting on which limestones sometimes occur, but more frequently clays and clayey shales, while the commonest rock at the surface is limestone. Near Padampur the Vindhyan rocks have a thickness of perhaps as much as 3,500 feet, and there are four distinct zones of limestone, each differing from the other lithologically. An outlier of the Vindhyan range is found in the Bārapahār hills, an accumulation of shales, sandstones and quartzites, the relations of which are of a complicated nature and point to a region of special disturbance.

Metamorphic. The vast majority of rocks are metamorphic, but very varied in composition. For example, the long hill ridges south of Sambalpur

and east of the Mahānadī are schistose and granitic gneisses, while in and near the town of Sambalpur the rocks are chiefly granitic and porphyritic gneisses. A point about 3 miles east of Sambalpur seems to be the centre of a great synclinical basin, the rocks on all sides consisting of granitic and syenitic gneisses with schistose and shaly alterations. The Katarbagā range, north of Sambalpur and a little to the west of Rengāli, is formed chiefly of quartzites; and in the tract north-west of the town, between the coal fields and the Lower Vindhyan rocks, appear schistose and granitic beds, commonly of a fine porphyritic variety. But perhaps the most prominent feature, especially in the area to the west of the Ib, is a series of ridges formed of quartzite with an almost constant strike from north-west to south-east. The most remarkable of these ridges culminates in the Sunāri peak, which consists of protogine granites, covered by quartzites and sandy schists. South of the Mahānadī the rocks consist principally of granitic gneisses, except in the neighbourhood of Barpāli, where trap-dykes occur in some abundance. In the Borāsāmbar area the hills are principally formed of several varieties of garnetiferous gneisses. Generally speaking, the metamorphic rocks of the district owe their crystalline character very possibly to one and the same period of metamorphism, but it is improbable that they are the result of the metamorphism of one uniform series of rocks.

Minerals. The district is fairly rich in minerals. Recent exploration has resulted in the discovery of one seam of good steam coal and of two seams of rather inferior quality in the Rāmpur coal-field within easy reach of the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway. The former is known as the Ib bridge seam and contains coal more than seven feet in thickness. Two samples which have been analyzed contained 52 and 55 per cent. respectively of fixed carbon. Limestone is found in the lower Vindhyan rocks from Padampur southwards. It varies from a somewhat splintery white and pink limestone to a blackish grey rock, in which there are strings of galena. The Mahānadī near Padampur contains large masses of this rock almost as pure as marble in appearance. There are also several outcrops of crystalline limestone in the metamorphic rocks; the principal of these are at Kujermat to the north and towards Bolangir to the south. Iron ores are found in most parts of the hilly country on the borders of the district, especially in the Borāsāmbar, Kolābirā and Rāmpur zamīndāris. Brown hæmatite appears in the rocks near Katarbagā, 16 miles north of Sambalpur, the ore being taken from the washed debris of the lode.

Galena occurs in the bed of the Mahānadī at Jhunān, 10 miles north-west of Sambalpur town. The history of its discovery is interesting. Professor V. Ball of the Geological Department, on visiting Sambalpur in 1874, was shown some specimens, which had been kept by the people for over 25 years. It appeared that galena was discovered before 1850 and was extracted, to a small extent, and used as a substitute for *surmā* or antimony for anointing the eyes. But the Rājā, Nārāyan Singh, being afraid that the mineral might attract Europeans, stopped excavation and ordered the lode to be covered up and concealed. In 1874, it was rediscovered by a party of villagers working along a trench laid down by Professor Ball. Among the first specimens found was one (sent to the Geological Museum, Calcutta) weighing one maund six seers four chittacks, of which about half was galena. On assay the galena yielded 12 oz. and 5 cwt. of silver to a ton of lead, a small percentage but enough to yield a profit on the cost of extraction. The bed is of quartz permeated by nests and strings of galena. The lode, however, does not rise to the surface or outcrop of the gneiss above the river bed, but begins somewhat abruptly several feet below. To the north of Sambalpur, near Talpuchia on the Ib, rolled pebbles, consisting of a mixture of oxide and carbonate of lead, have also been found.*

Gold probably occurs pretty generally throughout those portions of the district in which metamorphic rocks prevail. The washers, however, confine themselves chiefly to the beds of the Mahānadī and the Ib; though in the rains they are said to leave the larger rivers and wash in the small jungle streams. Gold-washers also work in the Ib below Tāhud within the area occupied by the Tālcher rocks; but whether gold is derived directly from the Tālcher rocks or has been brought down by the river is not known. The methods employed by, and the earnings of, the washers do not differ materially from those in Singhbhūm district.* Mica also exists, but the plates are too small to be of commercial value.

Diamonds. The district has long been famous as a diamond producing tract, and some of the oldest writers speak of the diamonds found in it as being of the purest quality found in India. As early as 1766 Clive sent an officer, Mr. Motte, to Sambalpur, to purchase diamonds, as he wished to use them as a convenient means of remitting money to England. This officer purchased a few diamonds, which at that time were found at the junction

* V. Ball, *On the Diamond, Gold and Lead Ores of the Sambalpur district*, Rec. Geo. Surv. Ind., Vol. X, pp. 186-192.

of the Ib and Mahānadī. Dr. Breton, a surgeon in the East India Company's service, gives details of the numbers and weights of the diamonds found in the Mahānadī between 1804 and 1818, from which we learn that one stone weighing 672 grains or 210·6 carats was seized by the Marāthā Commandant in 1809. Nothing is known of the subsequent history of this stone, but its weight would give it a high rank among the largest diamonds ever found. Other stones weighing 288 and 308 grains were received by the Rānī of Sambalpur, and in 1818 a diamond weighing 84 grains and valued at Rs. 5,000, was brought to the British Agent, who forwarded it to Government.

Professor Ball gives the following account of the way in which diamond mining was conducted under native rule:—"From personal enquiry from the oldest of the Jhorās, or washers at the village of Jhunān, and from various other sources, the following details have been obtained as to the manner in which the operations were carried on in the Rājā's time. In the centre of the Mahānadī, near Jhunān, there is an island called Hīrākud, which is about 4 miles long and for that distance separates the waters of the river into two channels. In each year, about the beginning of March or even later, when other work was slack and the level of the water was approaching its lowest, a large number of people—according to some of the present inhabitants as many as five thousand—assembled and raised an embankment across the mouth of the northern channel, its share of water being thus deflected into the southern. In the stagnant pools left in the former, sufficient water remained to enable the washers to wash the gravel accumulated between the rocks, in their rude wooden trays and cradles. Upon women seems to have fallen the chief burden of the actual washing, while the men collected the stuff. The implements employed and the method of washing were similar to those commonly adopted in gold-washing, save only that the finer gravel was not thrown away until it had been thoroughly searched for diamonds. Whatever gold was found became the property of the washer. Those who were so fortunate as to find a valuable stone were rewarded by being given a village. According to some accounts, the washers generally held their villages and lands rent-free; but it is scarcely likely that all who were engaged in the operations should have done so. The people apparently did not regard their (in a manner) enforced services as involving any great hardship; they would be glad to see the annual search re-established on the old terms."*

* V. Ball, *Manual of the Geology of India, Part III, Economic Geology*, Calcutta, 1881.

When Sambalpur was taken over by the British, the Government offered to lease out the right to mine diamonds, and in 1856 a notification appeared in the Gazette describing the prospects in somewhat glowing terms. For a short time a lease was held by an European at the very low rate of Rs. 200 per annum; but as it was given up voluntarily, it may be concluded that the lessee did not make it pay. The fact that the Government resumed possession of the rent-free villages, while the Rājā's operations had been carried on without any original outlay, materially altered the case, and rendered the employment of a considerable amount of capital then, as it would be now, an absolute necessity.

As regards the origin of the diamonds, Professor Ball writes as follows:—"The geological structure of the country leaves but little room for doubt as to the source from whence they are derived. Coincident with their occurrence is that of a group of rocks referable to the Lower Vindhyan or Karnul series, certain members of which series are now found, or are believed to have formerly existed, in the vicinity of all the known diamond-yielding localities in India, and in the case of actual rock-workings include the matrix of the gems. In several of the early accounts, the belief is either stated or implied that the diamonds are brought into the Mahānadī by its large tributary, the Ib. But we have the positive assurance of the natives that diamonds have not been found in that river, although gold is and has been regularly washed for. On the other hand, diamonds have certainly been found in the bed of the Mahānadī as far west as Chandarpur, and at other intermediate places, well within the area which is exclusively occupied by the quartzites, sandstone shales, and limestones of Vindhyan age. The fact that the place, Hīrākud, where the diamonds were washed for, is on metamorphic rocks, may be readily explained by the physical features of the ground. The rocky nature of the bed there, and the double channel caused by the island, afforded unusual facilities for, in the first place, the retention of the diamonds brought down by the river, and, secondly, for the operations by which the bed could on one side be laid bare, and the gravel washed by the simple contrivances known to the natives. It is impossible to say at present which the actual bed or beds of rock may be whence the diamonds have been derived, as there is no record or appearance of the rock matrix ever having been worked; but from the general lithological resemblance of the sandstones and shales of the Bārapahār hills with the diamond-bearing beds, and their associates in other parts of India, it seems not improbable that they include the matrix. Above Padampur, the Mahānadī runs through rocks of this age, and any one who

may hereafter embark upon the undertaking of searching for diamonds in Sambalpur should confine his operations, in the first instance, to the streams and small rivers which rise in the Bārapahār hills and join the Mahānadī on the south."

Pebbles of beryl, topaz, carbuncle, amethyst, cornelian, and clear quartz also used to be collected in the Mahānadī; but there is no record of either sapphires or rubies ever having been found. It is probable that the matrix of these, or most of them, exists in the metamorphic rocks, and is therefore distinct from that of diamonds.*

BOTANY. Sambalpur is, on the whole, a well-wooded country, Government reserved forests extending over 396 square miles, while zamīndāri forests have an area of 375 square miles. These forests are found mainly on the hills and in the broken country which forms so large a portion of the district. In the more level tracts the light sandy soil is admirably suited for the growth of fruit trees, and the abundance of mango groves and clumps of palm trees gives the village scenery a distinct charm. The forest vegetation of Sambalpur is included in the great *sāl* belt; and in the south-east, where the climate is somewhat moist, the forest has a tendency to become nearly evergreen.

The principal timber tree is *rengāl* or *sāl* (*Shorea robusta*), which is used for building houses and boats, for railway sleepers, country carts and agricultural implements. Next in importance as a timber tree is *piāsāl* or *bijā* (*Pterocarpus Marsupium*), which is used for making furniture, while *sāhāj* or *sāj* (*Terminalia tomentosa*) yields the commonest of all the building timbers, its bark being also used for tanning. Among other economically useful timber trees may be mentioned *karla* or *garāri* (*Cleistanthus collinus*), *lendya* or *senha* (*Lagerstrœmia parviflora*) and *dhāora* (*Anogneissus latifolia*), which are all employed for building purposes, while the tree last named is invariably used for making axles of carts. *Bandhan* or *tinsā* (*Ougeinia dalbergioides*), *mundi* or *keim* (*Stephegyne parvifolia*) and *haldu* or *halenda* (*Adina cordifolia*) also belong to this class, but are not found in any abundance. Teak (*Tectona grandis*) is confined to two places, viz., the Government forest of Lachhmīdungrī within 5 miles of Sambalpur and a small plantation near the rifle range at that town. The species yielding ornamental timber include *shisham* or rose-wood (*Dalbergia latifolia*), *gambhāri* or *kūmār* (*Gmelina arborea*), *bhirā* or satin-wood (*Chloroxylon Swietenia*), *kendu* or ebony (*Diospyros melanoxylon*) and *rohan* or Indian redwood

* V. Ball, *Manual of the Geology of India, Part III, Economic Geology*, Calcutta, 1881.

(*Soymida febrifuga*). From the *harirā* or *harrā* (*Terminalia Chebula*) the myrobalans of commerce are obtained, and its allied species *baherā* (*Terminalia belerica*) yields an inferior timber and a fruit which is used medicinally. The wood of the *kusum* (*Schleichera trijuga*) is commonly used for making sugarcane presses and oil mills, while its fruit is eaten, and oil is extracted from its seed. The *simul* or cotton tree (*Bombax malabaricum*) is common in the forests and also in the open country, the cotton surrounding the seeds being used to stuff quilts and cushions.

Among trees conspicuous for their beautiful flowers may be mentioned the *sunāri* or *amaltās* (*Cassia fistula*) with long pendulous racemes of yellow flowers, which have given it the name of the Indian laburnum, and also the *ganiāri* (*Cochlospermum gossypium*), a tree with large yellow flowers growing on dry stony slopes; the wood of the latter tree is used by postal runners for torches during the night time, while its gum furnishes an article of food. Of other flowering trees the most common are the *kuthar* or *kachnār* (*Bauhinia variegata*) with large blossoms of four white petals and one pink or variegated petal, and the *palās* or *palsā* (*Butea frondosa*), remarkable for its brilliant scarlet-orange flowers appearing when the tree is quite leafless; the latter are useful for dyeing, while its fibrous roots are made into ropes. The *siris* (*Albizzia Lebbek*), a handsome tree with greenish-yellow flowers, is found in the forest, but is rare. The principal flowering shrubs are the *kharkhasa* or *sihāru* (*Nyctanthes arbor-tristis*), with fragrant yellowish-white flowers used for garlands and also for dyes, and the *dhātuki* or *dhāuri* (*Woodfordia floribunda*) bearing red flowers, which are made into the vermilion dye so familiar during the Holī festival. Flowering herbaceous plants are few, and the most brilliant flowers are found on the trees.

Among small trees or shrubs growing in scrub-jungle may be mentioned the *chār* or *achār* (*Buchanania latifolia*), the fruit of which is an ingredient of sweetmeats and is also bartered for salt; the graceful *āonlā* (*Phyllanthus emblica*), the leaves of which are used for tanning; and *dhāman* (*Grewia vestita*), the wood of which is made into cart shafts. There are two species of *Zizyphus* very common in the forests, viz., *bair* (*Zizyphus Jujuba*), which is found on the sites of old deserted villages, and *ghanto* or *ghatol* (*Zizyphus Xylopyra*). There are also two species of *Gardenia*, viz., *kurdu* or *dekamalī* (*Gardenia gummifera*), the gum of which is used medicinally, while its fruit is eaten when ripe, and *damkurdu* (*Gardenia latifolia*), from the wood of which combs

are made. The fruit of the *patwāphal* or *mainphal* (*Randia dumetorum*) is used medicinally, and the roots of the *kure* or *kuda* (*Holarrhena antidysenterica*) are an antidote for diarrhœa and dysentery. Three other trees common in scrub jungle on the dry slopes of the hills are *salhia* or *salai* (*Boswellia thurifera*), *girungila* or *kulu* (*Sterculia urens*) and *mai* or *mowai* (*Odina Wodier*).

The principal creepers are *sialpatta* or *mahul* (*Bauhinia Vahlii*), the leaves of which are used for making country umbrellas and for plates, while the pods are fried, the seeds are eaten, and the fibrous bark is converted into string; and *budhla* (*Butea superba*), the leaves and flowers of which resemble those of the *palās* (*Butea frondosa*). *Dendrocalamus strictus* is the only bamboo found in the forests.

Of trees growing in the open country the most important is the *mahulā* or *mahuā* (*Bassia latifolia*) with its lofty spreading foliage. Its flowers are used as an article of food and also for the manufacture of country spirit. *Bambur* or *babūl* (*Acacia arabica*) is a tree favouring black cotton soil and, except on the banks of tanks, is rare in the Sambalpur district, and so is the *gulura* or *reimja* (*Acacia leucophlœa*). Of the *Ficus* family, *dumri* or *gular* (*Ficus glomerata*), *bar* or banyan (*Ficus indica*) and *pīpal* (*Ficus religiosa*) are abundant in the open country, and are also planted in villages from religious motives, for they are believed to be the resort of the gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon. The most common tree planted in groves in the neighbourhood of villages is the mango. Other trees planted for the sake of their fruit are *tentuli* or tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*), *kaith* (*Feronia elephantum*), *bair* or wild plum (*Zizyphus Jujuba*), *panus* (*Artocarpus integrifolia*), *munaga* (*Moringa pterygosperma*), *jāmbu* or *jāmun* (*Eugenia Jambolana*), and *bahalphal* (*Cordia myxa*). *Limb* or *nīm* (*Melia indica*) is planted freely, as it is supposed to be a disinfectant purifying the air; *karanj* (*Pongamia glabra*) is planted for the sake of its fruit and the oil extracted from its seeds, which is used medicinally for itch. The following trees are generally planted about the precincts of temples:—*bel* (*Aegle Marmelos*), *baula* or *molsuri* (*Mimusops Elengi*) and *asoka* (*Polyalthia longifolia*). The leaves of the first are sacred to Siva, the fragrant star-like flowers of the second are an object of worship, and the twigs and leaves of the third are used on festival occasions for festooning the shrines. Of the trees mentioned above, the *gular*, banyan, *pīpal*, mango, *jāmun*, *karanj* and *asoka* are commonly grown in avenues, and other avenue trees often planted are *bakam* (*Millingtonia hortensis*) and *siris* (*Albizzia Lebbek*). The

palmyra palm (*Borassus flabellifer*) is very common and is planted in almost every village, as its fruit when ripe is used as an article of food. The date palm (*Phœnix sylvestris*) is also met with, but not in all parts of the district. The *kattang* bamboo (*Bambusa arundinacea*) is often found planted in towns and villages.

There is a dearth of good grazing grasses, but the succulent *dūb* (*Cynodon dactylon*), which is sacred to Ganesh, grows all over the district on sandy soil where there is some moisture. Another good grass called *mūsākānī* or *musyāl* (*Iseilema Wightii*) is generally confined to old fallows or the ridges which form the boundaries of fields; it prefers clayey soil and is rarely found in the forests. The commonest grass of all is the *sukla* or *kusal* (*Pollinia argentea*), which is found everywhere in the forests and elevated places; it is really the common fodder grass of the district, and is excellent while young. Another grass found all over the district in small quantities is *panasi* or *bhaber* (*Pollinia eriopoda*), which is used for rope making. Among rarer grasses may be mentioned *kel* or *kaila* (*Andropogon annulatus*), *khas* (*Andropogon squamosus*), *tikhari* (*Andropogon Schœnanthus*), which yields the aromatic *rūsa* oil, and *kāns* (*Saccharum spontaneum*), which is used in religious ceremonies and is an enemy dreaded by the wheat cultivator. There are two weeds of the *Cassia* species, of which *Cassia tora* (known as *chakhandā*) is very common; it is eaten when young as a vegetable.*

"Sambalpur," writes Mr. Dewar, "is reputedly a good big game district, and in past years has been one of the happiest hunting grounds in the Central Provinces. But the cutting out of the forests and the spread of rice and cane cultivation into all the valleys and up all the streams have of late years curtailed the grazing grounds of wild animals and cut off their water-supplies. The available watering places are few and are easily watched by the poacher, who does much killing by night in the hot months. This abuse is very difficult to stop so long as the profitable trade in hides and horns is not restricted." ZOOLOGY.

In spite, however, of this diminution in the number of wild animals, and especially of ruminants, few districts in Bengal have such a wealth and variety of animal life. Though their numbers have greatly decreased in recent years, tigers are still fairly numerous. They are found mostly in the forest-clad hills bordering the district, from which they move into the neighbouring States if disturbed by wood cutting, coming back again when Wild animals.

* This account of the botany of Sambalpur has been prepared from a note by Mr. S. G. Paranjpe, formerly Divisional Forest Officer, Sambalpur.

felling begins there. Panthers are more common than tigers, though more rarely seen by the sportsman; they frequent open scrub-jungle throughout the district, and, like tiger, are very destructive to cattle. Leopards are common in the wooded tracts and are found in most of the small hills near villages. They are most daring in their depredations, often scaling the walls of a goat or sheep pen in the heart of a village and carrying off village dogs in the coolest manner. The *chītāh* or hunting leopard (*Cynælurus jubatus*) is also met with occasionally, more especially in the more open country to the south and west. The red lynx (*Felis caracal*), though very rare, has been seen and identified on more than one occasion. It is found in the south-west of the district, and one is known to have been run down with dogs a mile to the east of Sambalpur. Among other species of the family *Felidæ* may be mentioned the large civet cat, the lesser civet cat, the tree cat, the common jungle cat, and the leopard cat; the cat last named is fairly common and has been seen at Lamdungrī within 6 miles of Sambalpur.

Wolves are rare, but are found in the neighbourhood of Saraipāli and between Saraipāli and Borāsāmbar in the south-west of the district. Packs of wild dog infest the forests and are very destructive to game. They have been met with in the jungles near Sāsan Rengāli and Lakhanpur (Rāmpur) and are said to come down regularly from Hingīr. The striped hyæna and jackal are found all over the district, and the latter is described as infesting the Bargarh plain, where it does much damage to the finer and softer varieties of sugarcane. The Indian fox is fairly common in the more open parts to the east of Sambalpur, and a few have been seen near the town and towards Borāsāmbar. The Indian black bear or sloth bear (*Ursus labiatus*) is very common in the forests, where his surly temper makes him more dangerous to the wayfarer even than tiger. Maulings by bear are frequent, most of the victims being women going down the jungle paths with loads to market or gathering *mahuā* flowers in the early morning on the skirts of the forests. They also do a considerable amount of damage in the cane fields. Wild pig are even more mischievous; for they abound all over the district, except in the open plain, and damage both rice and cane, destroying in either case much more than they can eat. They are rarely fired at by the village *shikāris*, who confine their attention to deer; but sometimes, when very troublesome, they are caught in pits.

Wild elephants have disappeared from the district, though they occasionally make a foray into the cultivated land on the

borders of Rairākhol and Pātnā. The wild buffalo (*Bos bubalus*) is found, but is very rare, the only place in which it is met with being the valley of the Jonk river on the boundary between Sambalpur and Raipur; it is believed that only one small herd now survives. The *gaur* (*Bos gaurus*), the "bison" of sportsmen, is also rare, but is found on the Narsinghnāth plateau in the Borāsāmbar zamīndāri; cases have been known of their coming as far inland as Hero Ghenupāli near Sambalpur and directly south of that in Loisingh. Few representatives of the deer tribe are left. *Chītal* or spotted deer (*Cervus axis*) are found in the more open forests and glades, more especially in Borāsāmbar and round Sambalpur itself, but are nowhere common; to the north of the Mahānadī they have been exterminated. Both barking deer (*Cervulus muntjac*) and mouse deer (*Tragulus meminna*) certainly occur, but are rare. The former is occasionally found in the Rājpur jungle and the latter in the forests to the south. It might be expected that the *sāmbar* (*Cervus unicolor*) would be common in the fine forests of this district, but it has been almost exterminated, and one may go for a whole year without seeing one of these noble stags except on the borders of Borāsāmbar and Bāmra. On the other hand, the *nīlgai* or blue bull (*Tragocamelus boselaphus*) and the four-horned antelope are common. The antelope proper (*Antilope cervicapra*), the "black buck" of sportsmen, is however extremely rare, being found only in a small tract of open country to the north and west of Borāsāmbar, and there only in small numbers. The *chinkāra* or ravine deer is said to be found in the forests.

Among other animals may be mentioned the long-tailed *langur* or grey ape, the red-faced monkey, hedgehog, porcupine, mungoose, musk shrew, hare, badger and scaly ant-eater, all of which are common. The tribe of rodents includes the jerboa rat, the bandicoot, the common striped squirrel, and also the comparatively rare brown flying squirrel (*Pteromyx oral*), a large squirrel with loose folds of skin which can be spread out like a small parachute. The ordinary flying fox is common, and the otter is found in the Mahānadī and its tributary streams.

Game birds.

The district also possesses a comparatively rich variety of game birds. Pea fowl, red jungle-fowl and red spur-fowl are numerous in the forests, and painted spur-fowl are found in small numbers to the east. Grey partridgeare also found in small numbers, and the painted partridge in scrub-jungle towards the south and east. The large grey quail and bush quail are common, while the rain quail and large button quail are met with occasionally. Sand grouse are found towards the west beyond

Ramelā, and a few have been shot on the barer hills round Sambalpur itself. The Indian bustard has been identified. Green pigeon are plentiful, and plover are fairly common, but the blue rock pigeon is comparatively rare.

Of water-fowl there are many representatives. During the cold weather duck and teal are plentiful on the many tanks scattered throughout the district, and also on the Mahānadī and Ib, while snipe are equally plentiful on the marshy ground and irrigated rice fields below tanks. The principal varieties of immigrant duck are the pintail and gadwall, but the ruddy sheldrake or Brāhmanī duck is also very common. The comb, the spotted-bill, the pink-headed duck, and the shoveller are also met with occasionally. The common whistling teal and large whistling teal are frequently found, and also the blue-winged teal and cotton teal. The red-crested pochard is found in enormous numbers on all the larger stretches of water during the cold weather, besides the red-headed and white-eyed pochard. Flocks of demoiselle crane frequent the sandy stretches of the Mahânadī at this time, as well as curlew, godwit, and two or three varieties of sand pipers. Snipe are common in the winter, and can be had at most camping places, though the snipe grounds below the tanks are seldom more than a hundred acres in area, so that big bags cannot be made. They are mainly pintail and jack snipe, but the painted snipe is also found in small numbers.

Fish. Fish of many varieties, including mahseer, *tengrā* and *rohu*, are abundant in the Mahānadī, and are also caught in the Ib, Ang and Jīrā.

Reptiles. Poisonous snakes are very common. The iguana is caught and eaten by the lowest classes.*

CLIMATE. The climate of Sambalpur, on the whole, compares favourably with that of other districts in Bengal. In the interior the temperature is, ordinarily, not excessively high, but in the town of Sambalpur the heat is aggravated during the summer months by radiation from the sandy bed of the Mahānadī. This season of the year, *i.e.*, from the middle of April to the end of June is distinctly trying, though comparatively healthy. The monsoon usually breaks in the second fortnight of June or in the first half of July, and this period is not unpleasant except during breaks in the rains, when the weather at once becomes hot and oppressive. The cold season is pleasant, but it is of short duration, lasting practically only three months, and it is quite

* This account of the Fauna of Sambalpur has been compiled mainly from notes contributed by Captain F. H. Watling, I.M.S., and Mr. J. J. Hobday, formerly Divisional Forest Officer, Sambalpur.

warm in February. The mean shade temperature for the year is 81°. Temperature falls to 49° in the winter months and is at its highest in May, when the thermometer rises to 112° and 113° in the shade.

The average rainfall is heavier and less capricious than that of the Central Provinces, but lighter and less steady than that of Bengal. The district appears to be situated on the edge of the monsoon current from the Bay of Bengal, which ensures a steady supply to the eastern portion, but falls off in strength westward of a line drawn from north to south through its centre. Consequently, as a rule, the rainfall in the Bargarh subdivision is not only less in amount, but also more variable than in the Sambalpur subdivision. It is also possible that the short rainfall of the former tract may be due in part to the fact that extensive areas have been denuded of forest growth. The marginal table gives the normal rainfall for each month in the year and shews the differences between the amount falling in the east and west of the district; but it should be mentioned that Sambalpur is in the vicinity of hills, whereas Bargarh stands in an open plain at a distance of about 25 miles from the Bārapahār range. It will be seen also that the average annual rainfall for the whole district is 58·49 inches, but the amount varies largely from year to year, *e.g.*, it was 33·23 inches in 1865 66, 94·63 inches in 1896-97, and 44·33 inches in 1899-1900. Rainfall.

Month.	Sambalpur.	Bargarh.	Average.
January ...	0·53	0·35	0·14
February ...	0·58	0·34	0·46
March ...	0·89	1·03	0·96
April ...	0·57	0·39	0 43
May ..	1·41	1 05	1·23
June ...	12·08	8·84	10·46
July ...	19·87	16·87	18·37
August ...	16·39	13·96	15·18
September ...	8·86	7·75	8·30
October ..	2·13	1·73	1·93
November ...	0·42	0·44	0·43
December ...	0·25	0 25	0·25
TOTAL ...	63·98	53·00	58·49

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY.

EARLY HISTORICAL REFERENCES.

According to some authorities, Sambalpur may perhaps be identified with Sambalaka, which Ptolemy mentions as a city in the country of the Mandalai, the Malli of Pliny, whose modern representatives are believed to be the Mundās. It may also have formed part of the territory of the Sabarai, whom General Cunningham takes to be the Suari of Pliny and would identify with the aboriginal Savarās, a race still numerous in the district. The latter theory seems the more probable, as Ptolemy describes the river Manada as rising in the country of the Sabarai and says that diamonds were found there in abundance. The Manada is most probably the same as the Mahānadī, and Sambalpur has long had the reputation of producing fine diamonds. Gibbon, indeed, states, without however giving reasons:—"As well as we can compare ancient with modern geography, Rome was supplied with diamonds from the mine of Sumelpur in Bengal." Tavernier, again, mentions Soumelpour as a region rich in diamonds, containing the most ancient mines in India, and this place has been identified by most writers with Sambalpur.

Professor Ball, however, who has made a special study of the early references to diamond mines in India, has brought forward a mass of cumulative evidence to shew that Soumelpour is the same as Semah on the Koel (the Gouel of Tavernier) in the south of the Palāmau district, though he admits that, so far as he knows, there is no local tradition of diamonds having been found in that river. He is also inclined to identify the latter place with the Sambalaka of Ptolemy in the country of the Mandalai, *i.e.*, the Mundās of Chotā Nāgpur; and in face of the evidence adduced by him, it is safer to regard the supposed antiquity of Sambalpur as purely speculative.*

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*J. W. McCrindle, *Ancient India as described by Ptolemy* (Calcutta 1885) pp. 71, 167-9, 172-3; V. Ball, *A Geologist's Contribution to the History of Ancient India*, Indian Antiquary, Vol. XIII, 1884; *Manual of the Geology of India, Part III, Economic Geology* (Calcutta, 1881), p. 30; V. Ball, *Tavernier's Travels in India* (1889), vol. II, pp. 81-86, 455-461.

LEGENDARY HISTORY.

According to tradition, Sambalpur was at an early period under the rule of the Mahārājās of Pātnā, who were the head of a cluster of States known as the Athara Garhjāt (*i.e.*, the 18 forts) and dominated a large tract to the east of the Ratanpur kingdom. Their ancestor is said to have been a Rājput prince, who lived near Mainpurī and was expelled from his territories by the Muhammadans. He came with his family to Pātnā, where he was killed in battle; but his wife, who was pregnant, was sheltered by a Binjhāl, in whose hut she gave birth to a son. At that time Pātnā was divided amongst eight chiefs, each of whom took it in turn to reign for one day over the whole territory. The Rājput boy Ramai Deva, on growing up, killed the eight chiefs and made himself sole ruler of Pātnā. In succeeding reigns the family extended their influence over the surrounding territories, including the bulk of what is now the Sambalpur district, and the adjoining States, until all their chiefs became tributary. In the 15th century A. D. Narsingh Deva, the twelfth Rājā of Pātnā, ceded to his brother Balrām Deva all the jungle country bounded on the north by the river Mahānadī, on the east by the river Tel, on the south by the Ang, and on the west by the Jonk. Balrām Deva, who is regarded as the founder of the Sambalpur Rāj, first established himself at a place in the Bargarh *tahsīl* which he called Nuāgarh, *i.e.*, the new fort. Next, as his power grew, he made a new capital at a larger place called Baragarh, or the big fort, the modern Bargarh. Thence he moved to Chaurpur, a village lying opposite to Sambalpur on the southern bank of the river Mahānadī. One day, the story goes, he crossed the river, while out hunting, and set his hounds at a hare. After a long chase, he found, to his surprise, that the dogs had been repulsed by the hare, and struck by this extraordinary courage in the most timid of animals, concluded that there must be some supernatural virtue in the land. He therefore determined to build a fort there, and in it installed Samlāi, the tutelary goddess of his family. The town thus established is the modern Sambalpur. A similar legend is still current regarding the foundation of Kharagpur, the city of the hare, in the Monghyr district.

The State founded by Balrām Deva soon became the most powerful of all the Garhjāt States, and the power of the Sambalpur chiefs steadily increased, while that of Pātnā declined. Balrām Deva was succeeded by his eldest son Hirde Nārāyan Deva, and the latter by Balbhadra Sāi, who settled the country now known as the Sonpur State on his second son Madan Gopāl, whose descendants still hold it. His eldest son, Madhukar Sāi,

succeeded to the Sambalpur Râj ; and on his death it passed to Baliār Singh, whose name is said to be derived from the fact that he was a strong man and powerful ruler, whose suzerainty was acknowledged by the chiefs of the eighteen Garhjāts, viz., Bāmra, Gāngpur, Bonai, Pātnā, Sonpur, Khariār, Rairākhol, Raigarh, Sārangarh, Bindra-Nuāgarh, Sakti, Borāsāmbar, Phuljhar, Baud, Athgarh, Pānchgarh, Mayūrbhanj and Keonjhar. The Rājās of Pātnā and Sonpur were of the same stock as the Rājā of Sambalpur; those of Gāngpur, Bāmra, Bonai, Mayūrbhanj, Keonjhar, Khariār and Baud were, it is said, connected with him by marriage; and the rest were Rājputs, Binjhāls and Gonds. Tradition still attests the prowess of Baliār Singh, tells how he overcame the Rājā of Baud, and relates a quaint story of a pilgrimage he made to Purī. There he was invited to dine in the house of his mother's sister, who was the queen dowager. The latter, who had heard of the courage and strength of Baliār Singh, challenged him to shew how he could defend himself if captured in his present unguarded state. Baliār Sing promptly replied:—"Do not imagine me unguarded or unarmed. Even now I can destroy thousands." So saying, he drew from inside his coat and turban some knives and swords which he had kept concealed there; it is said that he wore a *tegā*, or scimitar, so thin and slender, that it could be wrapped round his waist and worn as if it were a waist-band. The queen dowager, pleased with his ready address, induced her son, the king of Purī, to bestow on Baliār Singh the high title of *Hīrākhand Chhatrapati Mahārāj*, *i.e.*, the great lord of the country of diamonds.

Baliār Singh was succeeded by his son Ratan Singh, and the latter by Chhatra Sāi, who fortified the town of Sambalpur, erected a stronghold there, and excavated a tank, now known as Chhatrasāgar, near the Pātneswarī temple. There is a tradition that the country was invaded by the Muhammadan general Kālāpahār during his reign. The story is that when Kālāpahār invaded Orissa (A. D. 1568), the priests of Purī fled with the image of Jagannāth and buried it on the Mahānadī to the south of Sambalpur. Kālāpahār followed them to Sambalpur with his army, but could not force an entrance into the fort. While encamped outside it, his force was destroyed by the goddesses Samlāi and Pātneswarī; for the former assumed the form of a milkmaid and sold curds and milk to his soldiers, while the latter appeared as a *mālini* or gardener and sold them fruit. Milk, curds and fruit spread desolation in the army, for cholera broke out; and Samlāi put Kālāpahār to flight, capturing among other things his drum, the sound of which had the reputation of making

the limbs of the Hindu gods and goddesses fall off their images. The drum, *ghantā* or big bell, and *ghūlghūla* or small bell taken by Samlāi are still to be seen in her temple; while the tombs of the Muhammadans who accompanied Kālāpahār are pointed out at Sankerbāndh, where his army encamped.*

It should be added that the legend which says that the Muhammadan invasion took place during the reign of Chhatra Sāi cannot very well be entertained; for Mr. Motte, who visited Sambalpur in 1766, has left it on record that his son and successor Ajit Singh died in May that year. Local tradition says that the latter built the fort at Sambalpur as a protection against the raids of the Marāthās, and this can well be believed; for Motte gives an account of how the Marāthās attempted to storm the fort during his visit. He also makes it clear that the reign of Ajit Singh was one of internal feud and that this continued to be the order of the day when his son Ubhaya Singh succeeded.

THE MARĀTHĀ CONQUEST.

With Ubhaya Singh we enter on more certain ground, for we are no longer dependent on legend and tradition, but have the narrative of Mr. Motte, which gives a graphic and detailed account of the country in 1766. This is of especial interest as being the first reliable account of Sambalpur, and is therefore published as an Appendix to this chapter. From other sources we learn that in the reign of Ubhaya Singh the forces of Sambalpur obtained a temporary success in the struggle with the spreading power of the Marāthās—a struggle which ended half a century later in the annexation of Sambalpur. Several guns of large calibre, it is said, were being taken from Cuttack up the Mahānadī in boats, in order that they might be transported to Nāgpur. Akbar Rāya, the minister of Ubhaya Singh, thinking this a good opportunity to strengthen the Sambalpur fort, caused the boatmen to scuttle the boats in deep water, so that the guns all sunk, and many Marāthā artillerymen were drowned. He then recovered eight of the guns and mounted them on the fort. The Rājā of Nāgpur sent a strong detachment to avenge the insult and recover the guns, but it was repulsed with slaughter. About the year 1797 an outrage committed by Jait (or Jayet) Singh, the successor of Ubhaya Singh, led to the conquest of his principality by the Marāthās. It appears that Nānā Sāhib Bhonslā, a relation of the Nāgpur Rājā, was going on a pilgrimage to Jagannāth with a large party of followers, when he was treacherously attacked by the levies of Sambalpur and Sārangarh, and also by those of Sonpur

* Reports Arch. Surv. Ind., Vol. XVII, pp. 59-60. I am indebted to Bābu Satyabādī Pādhi and Bābu Nand Kishore Bohidār of Sambalpur for assistance in preparing this account of the legendary history of Sambalpur.

and Baud. He managed, however, to make his way to Cuttack, and returning with some Marāthā troops, succeeded after some severe fighting in making the Baud chief and Prithwī Singh, the chief of Sonpur, prisoners. He then encamped for the rainy season in the Sonpur country, and in the meantime Jait Singh strengthened the Sambalpur fort in expectation of being attacked. As soon as the rains were over, Nānā Sāhib appeared before Sambalpur, and regularly invested the town. For five months he remained before the walls without being able to effect an entrance, but by chance one of his men discovered that the moat near the Samlāi gate was fordable. Nānā Sāhib, on hearing this, assembled his forces, made a rush across the moat, and forced the gate. The fort was quickly taken; the Rājā, Jait Singh, and his son, Mahārāj Sāi, were captured and sent as prisoners to Chāndā; and Bhūp Singh, a Marāthā leader, was left at Sambalpur to administer the country for the Marāthā Government.

Bhūp Singh assumed an independent position, and on being called to Nāgpur to account for his conduct, refused to comply with the summons. The Nāgpur Rājā then sent a large force to punish his contumacy, but Bhūp Singh surprised the Marāthās in an ambuscade at the Singhorā pass and drove them back in rout. This was only a temporary success. Bhūp Singh foolishly provoked the enmity of one Chamrā Gaontiā by plundering his village, which was near the pass; and shortly afterwards, when a second body of Marāthās arrived from Nāgpur, Chamrā placed the Marāthā troops in ambush in the same pass. He then sent word to Bhūp Singh that a few troopers were pillaging the country, and when Bhūp Singh brought a force through the pass, the Marāthās fell upon it and almost annihilated it. Bhūp Singh fled to Sambalpur and thence retired with the Rānīs of Jait Singh to Kolābirā, from which he made frequent appeals for the assistance of the British.

Cession to the British. After this, Sambalpur remained under the rule of the Marāthās until 1803, when Raghujī Bhonslā, Rājā of Nāgpur, after the decisive battles of Assaye and Argāum, ceded it to the British by the treaty of Deogāon, together with the adjoining States and the seaboard districts of Orissa. The town was quietly occupied by Captain Roughsedge, with a portion of the Rāmgarh local battalion, and Tātiā Pharnavīs, the Marāthā Governor, who had replaced Bhūp Singh, withdrew to Nāgpur. Sambalpur did not long remain under British suzerainty, for in 1805 it was gratuitously restored with the Pātnā State to Raghujī Bhonslā, "in consideration," the official account says, "of the great loss to which the Rājā had been subjected by the transfer of the

tribute and allegiance of the chiefs to the British Government." The real reason, however, for the cession may perhaps be found in the "feebly economical policy" of Sir George Barlow, the then Governor-General, who laid down the principle that "a certain extent of dominion, local power, and revenue, would be cheaply sacrificed for tranquillity and security within a contracted circle, and withdrew from every kind of relation with the Native States, to which we were not specifically pledged by treaty; and the minor principalities adjacent to or intermixed with the Marāthā possessions were left to their fate." *

MARATHA RULE.

This withdrawal of the British protection, it is said, "caused great distress to all classes of the inhabitants, and many attempts were made to induce the Rājā of Berār to exclude them from the treaty and to receive an equivalent for them in some other part of our territories. He, however, remained obstinate, and we, being unwilling to create jealousy or discontent by any further urging of the question, endeavoured to satisfy the people by promising that in the event of further circumstances bringing them again in our power, they should be permanently attached to the British dominions."† The Marāthās, however, did not obtain possession of the country for some time. The Rājā of Sambalpur offered so effectual an opposition to the cession, that in 1807 the Nāgpur State was obliged to solicit the assistance of the British Government, being unable itself to raise funds sufficient to equip an adequate force; and Mr. Elphinstone, the ambassador at Nāgpur, was consequently directed to remonstrate with the Rājā. Next year the Marāthās, having tried open force without success, obtained possession of Sambalpur by means of treachery. They entered into a solemn engagement, confirmed by oaths and religious ceremonies, by which the Rānī, on paying up arrears of tribute and undertaking for its future payment, was to be left in independent possession. Having thus lulled her suspicions, they suddenly attacked her troops and surprised the fortress. The Rānī escaped with difficulty and made her way to the territories of the British Government, which granted her a pension of Rs. 600 a month.‡

Sambalpur remained under the Marāthā rule for nine years, and their administration was in the last degree tyrannical. Raghujī, deprived of a large part of his territory, tried to make the loss good by incessant exactions, which earned him the sobriquet of the big *baniyā*. The Marāthā Governors followed

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* Sir Alfred Lyall, *The Rise of the British Dominion in India*, 1893.

† Bengal and Agra Gazetteer, 1841.

‡ W. Hamilton, *Description of Hindostan*, 1820.

suit, and an idea of their rapacity may be gathered from a quaint story told by Dr. Breton. A large diamond, weighing 672 grains, had been found in the Mahānadī, and this the finders brought to the Rānī. Unfortunately she was engaged in the funeral ceremonies of her mother-in-law, and before they were finished, the Marāthā troops arrived and expelled her from the country. A treacherous servant betrayed the secret to Chandrajī, the Marāthā commandant, who offered to give the finders a village and Rs. 1,000 if they gave it up. When they claimed the reward, he stormed at them, saying they had given him a stone instead of a diamond, and had them driven from his presence.*

BRITISH SUZERAINTY.

Sambalpur again came under British suzerainty in 1817, when the fourth Marāthā war broke out, being finally ceded by a treaty concluded in 1826. When the British troops took the field, the inhabitants of Sambalpur, mindful of the promise given 12 years before, made frequent offers to Major Roughsedge, who was in command of the troops at Hazāribāgh, to assist him in driving the Marāthās out of the country. It is significant of the detestation in which the latter were held that, when the fort of Sambalpur surrendered, the garrison made it a distinct condition that the British sepoys should escort them beyond the borders of the State and protect them from the attacks of the infuriated peasants. Jait Singh had, meanwhile, been kept in confinement by the Marāthās with his son; but Major Roughsedge pleaded his cause so energetically, that Sir Richard Jenkins, the Resident at Nāgpur, obtained his release from Chāndā in 1817. He was restored to power in that year, but died in 1818, and the country was then administered by the British for a year. Mahārāj Sāi, the son of Jait Singh, was made Rājā in 1820, though without the feudal superiority which the former Rājās had held over the other chiefships, advantage being taken of the circumstances in which Sambalpur was found to annul the dependency of the chiefs of the neighbouring States, to whom separate *sanads* were granted in 1821.

Mahārāj Sāi died in 1827, and his widow, Rānī Mohan Kumārī, was allowed to succeed. Disturbances immediately broke out, and for some years there was constant internecine strife between the recognized rulers and pretenders to the chiefship. The most prominent of the latter was Surendra Sāi, who claimed the chiefship as being descended from Madhukar Sāi,

* P. Breton, *Medico-Topography of the Ceded Provinces, South-West Frontier*, 1826.

the fourth Rājā of Sambalpur. He was readily supported by discontented Gond and Binjhāl zamīndārs, who found their privileges threatened and their lands encroached on by Hindu favourites of the Rānī. Villages were plundered to within a few miles of Sambalpur; and though Lieutenant Higgins, with a body of the Rāmgarh Battalion, which was stationed in the fort, drove off the insurgents, matters became so serious, that it became necessary to march a force from Hazāribāgh to put an end to the disturbances. This force was commanded by Captain Wilkinson, who, after hanging several of the rebels, came to the conclusion that there would be endless trouble so long as the Rānī remained in power. He accordingly deposed her in 1833 and set up Nārāyan Singh, a descendant of Bikram Singh, the eldest son of Rājā Baliār Singh, who had hitherto been considered not qualified to hold the Rāj owing to his mother being of inferior caste. Nārāyan Singh was at this time what is called at Sambalpur a *Bābu*, a title implying that the individual is of the Chauhān or chief's family, and was apparently a sort of personal attendant on the Rānī. He is described as having been perfectly astounded when it was proposed to make him Rājā, so much so that he prayed the Agent not to exalt him to so dangerous a position. However, Mohan Kumārī was sent off to Cuttack, the Government troops were withdrawn, and Nārāyan Singh was left to manage his newly acquired principality as well as he could.

Rebellion broke out at once, the Gonds rising under Balbhadra Dāo, a Gond zamīndār of Lakhanpur; and it was a long time before the rebellion could be put down, as the insurgents always found shelter in the vast range of hills known as the Bārapahār. Balbhadra Dāo was, however, at last slain at Debrigarh, the highest point of the hills and a noted rebel stronghold. An even more serious disturbance followed in 1839, chiefly due to Surendra Sāi, who looked upon Nārāyan Singh as an usurper, and, as already mentioned, claimed the throne on the ground of his descent from the fourth Rājā of Sambalpur. In 1840 he and his brother Udwant Sāi, with their uncle Balrām Singh, murdered in cold blood the son and father of Daryāo Singh, zamīndār of Rāmpur. Upon this the three were arrested, tried, and sent off to the jail at Hazāribāgh as life-prisoners.

BRITISH ANNEXATION.

Nārāyan Singh died in 1849, and his widow, Rānī Mukhyapan Devī, assumed the reins of government; but as he had died without male issue, the country was annexed by the British. This decision was taken in pursuance of Lord Dalhousie's well-known Doctrine of Lapse; but the case of Sambalpur was different from that of other native States, for no adoption had ever

been proposed, and the last Rājā had during his lifetime expressly intimated his wish that the British Government should take possession of his principality and provide for his Rānīs.* Accordingly Mr. Crawford, the Agent to the Governor-General, issued a proclamation that the State had lapsed to the British Government, and sent two native officials, Munshi Prasanna Lāl and Rai Rūp Singh, to take over the Rājā's papers, and to dispose of petty cases, etc. Mr. Crawford himself arrived at Sambalpur with a regiment of the Rāmgarh Battalion in December 1849, bringing with him Dr. J. Cadenhead. The latter officer was left in charge of the district as Principal Assistant with Rūp Singh as "Native Assistant," and Nārāyan Singh's widow, Rānī Mukhyapan Devī, was sent off to Cuttack, with a pension of Rs. 100 per mensem.

RULE OF NATIVE CHIEFS.

An idea of the internal state of the country before the British annexation may be gathered from the description given by Lieutenant Kittoe in his account of a *Journey through the Forests of Orissa* published in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal for May 1839. "Sumbulpur," he says, "lapsed to the British Government in 1827 by the death of the late Raja, but for some reason they sought for an heir-at-law and conferred it on an obscure and aged zamindar, and a perfect imbecile, who is now entirely in the hands of his crafty ministers. These people and the Brāhmans possess the best lands and obtain his sanction to all kinds of extortion; the farmers in their turn grind their ryots; the effects of such an unjust and oppressive system are everywhere apparent. It is said that the Raja realizes Rs. 7,00,000 per annum, but Rs. 4,00,000 is perhaps nearer the mark, including valuable diamonds, which are occasionally found. It is certain that, were the province under proper rule, much more could be made of it. Therefore, it is to be hoped that on the demise of the present Raja, who has no children, the Government will avail itself of the opportunity and resume it. At present it pays us an annual tribute of Rs. 8,000, Rs. 500 of which has for some years past been remitted in consideration of the dawk road being kept in repair, and the jungle in its immediate vicinity cleared.

"The town of Sumbulpur extends for upwards of 2 miles along the proper left bank of the river; of this space the fort occupies about three-quarters of a mile. It is fast falling to ruin; the Raja no longer resides in the old *Noor* (citadel, palace), which

* *The Administration of Lord Dalhousie*, Calcutta Review, Vol. XXII (p. 35), 1854; *Sir Charles Jackson and Lord Dalhousie*, Calcutta Review, Vol. XLII, (p. 180), 1866.

is occupied by some of his officers; there is a miserable garrison of a few ragamuffins dressed as sepahis, and some 20 or 30 sowars, whose steeds are like Pharaoh's lean kine. The walls are in a very dilapidated state, having suffered much from the effects of the extraordinary flood in 1836. The bamboo thicket, which was cut down during the time the territory was in our possession, used to act as a breakwater, and protected the walls, which are very ill-constructed of unhewn stones. The ditch and swamp which defended the other three faces are in a great measure filled up and overgrown with weeds, and must render that quarter of the town very unhealthy. There is no appearance of any great trade being carried on, nor is there so much as the sight of such a large and populous place would lead you to suppose. Merchants concentrate here from Cuttack, Budruc, Nagpur, Bhopal, Chutteesgurh, Sirgoojah, and barter their goods. Those of the lower provinces bringing salt, cocoanuts, cotton, cloths, spices, brass utensils, etc., exchange the same with those of the central for wheat, gram, lac, and cotton. Gold in small lumps is also taken in payment, and occasionally diamonds. The only produce of the province exported consists of oil seeds, cotton and rice, which are taken by bullocks, and (during the rains) sent by water to the Mogulbundi of Orissa."

Lieutenant Kittoe adds an instructive instance of the methods of justice, saying—"I was somewhat surprised one morning while taking my ride to see three human heads stuck on a pole at the junction of two roads near the town; they were placed there in January 1838, their owners having forfeited them for treason, though not without a protracted and severe struggle." As he visited Sambalpur in May 1838, these heads had been exposed for 4 months.

FEUDAL SYSTEM. The general nature of the rule of the native chiefs of Sambalpur has been forcibly illustrated in the Settlement Report by Mr. Dewar. "The royal household received supplies of necessaries from its rich domain lands in such villages as Talab lying near the palace, but while the Rājā remained in residence at his headquarters, the headmen of villages, both far and near, sent in requisitions of produce in addition to their customary money payments. When he toured through his State, further supplies were exacted, and all officers of Government lived free of charge, and took toll not only from the fields and gardens but also from the looms and nets. At times villagers were liable to render unpaid labour on the roads and public buildings. These, the usual incidents of feudal rule, represented an amount of taxation large out of proportion with the fixed annual payments of cash.

They were further added to on all exceptional or recurring occasions of expense by the levy of *nazarānas* on the headmen of villages. Their amounts were determinable only by the State, and they were liable to take the form of heavy benevolences. The zamīndārs, besides their nominal tributes, and besides the cost of presents paid and produce consumed during a royal progress in time of peace, were in war time liable to be called out with men, arms and supplies.

"The total revenue, probably not less than five times the fixed annual collections, can never under this system have been a light one, even in prosperous and peaceful years. How heavily it pressed on the villages during the first half of the nineteenth century can still be recollected by old men. Progress in cultivation was then hopelessly handicapped by the internal disorders that prevailed. These were not of the dignity of regular warfare, which, disastrous for a time, does not continuously harry the cultivator. To the leaders they were dynastic struggles, but to their followers and to the people at large they were episodes in a long inter-racial feud carried out bitterly in every village by means of raids, arson, torture and murder. The condition of the cultivator was not unlike that of French and English settlers in North America during the eighteenth century, when these had to constantly to guard their homes and fields against aboriginals led and armed by French and English captains. It is not surprising that even in the open parts of the country cultivation was limited to the immediate vicinity of fenced villages.

"It was in these circumstances that the district came under British rule."

EARLY BRITISH ADMINISTRATION. The first acts of the new government were apparently neither judicious nor conciliatory. The revenue was at once raised by one-fourth indiscriminately, without reference to the capabilities of the villages; and the whole of the free-hold grants, religious and other, were resumed. Those who held villages entirely rent-free were assessed at half rates, without any reference to the period for which the grant had been held, or to the terms of the tenure. Assignments in money or grain from the revenues of villages were resumed, as well as assignments of land in villages. Great dissatisfaction was consequently created at the outset, and so seriously did the Brāhmans, who form a numerous and powerful community, look upon it, that they went in a body to Rānchī to appeal, without however obtaining any redress. In 1854 a second settlement was made on equally indiscriminate principles, the assessments of all villages being again raised by one-fourth. The result was an enormous rise in the

revenue obtained by Government. "The amount", says a writer in 1854, "paid by this State as tribute previous to 1849 was only Rs. 8,800. The amount now taken in the shape of direct revenue is Rs. 74,000, of which only Rs. 25,000 are expended in the cost of collection and the payment of establishments, including an European officer." In these circumstances, it is perhaps not altogether surprising that, when Surendra Sāi headed a revolt during the Mutiny of 1857, he was joined by a number of chiefs, who feared further losses under British settlements. The chief of Kolābirā or Jaipur was one of the most powerful of these zamīndārs, and on his taking up the rebel cause, many of the others followed from the force of example, or were compelled to join by the more influential. A few, however, held aloof, among whom may be mentioned Gobind Singh of Jharsagurā, who had previously revolted against the Rānī Mohan Kumārī and looked upon himself as the rightful heir to the State.

When the Mutiny of 1857* broke out, the troops stationed at Sambalpur consisted of a detachment (150 foot and 12 horse) of the Rāmgarh Battalion, on the loyalty of which little reliance was placed, as it was believed to depend on the fidelity of the troops at Dinapore. These apprehensions were justified in the case of the detachment at Hazāribāgh, which, on hearing of the rising at Dinapore, mutinied, plundered the treasury, broke open the jail, and released the prisoners, among whom were Surendra Sāi, the claimant of the Sambalpur Rāj, and his brother Udwant Sāi. All remained quiet, however, at Sambalpur, and the detachment remained perfectly staunch—as indeed it did through the whole course of the rebellion. Before the end of August rumours of insurrectionary movements had begun to spread, though no actual outbreak occurred for some time; and early in September two companies of Madras troops were ordered up from Cuttack to Sambalpur by Mr. Cockburn, the Commissioner of Orissa. REBELLION OF 1857.

This judicious movement was probably the means of saving Sambalpur, for Surendra Sāi and Udwant Sāi soon after their release entered the district, and a number of followers quickly collected round them. In the middle of September they entered the town of Sambalpur with a force of 1,400 or 1,600 men, and established themselves within the precincts of the old fort. Thence Surendra Sāi sent to ask Captain Leigh, the Senior

* This account of the Mutiny has been prepared mainly from the "Minute by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal on the Mutinies as they affected the Lower Provinces under the Government of Bengal."

Assistant Commissioner in charge, to grant him an interview, stipulating for a safe conduct. When Captain Leigh received him on these terms, Surendra Sāi assured him that he had no intention of aspiring to the Rāj, and that his only object was to induce Government to cancel the remaining portion of his and his brother's imprisonment. Captain Leigh promised to represent the matter to Government, and in the meantime Surendra Sāi agreed to disperse his followers and remain at Sambalpur, whilst Udwant Sāi was permitted to reside in the village of Khindā, a little distance off. The promise was soon broken, for on the 31st October Surendra Sāi made his escape from Sambalpur and joined his brother at Khindā, where 1,400 men had assembled.

A further reinforcement of two companies of the 40th Madras Native Infantry had been despatched under Captain Knocker from Cuttack on the 10th October, and with them were sent 50 men of the Orissa Paik Companies, who were to undertake the station duties and so release the regular troops for more active service. Shortly afterwards, Lieutenant Hadow of the Madras Artillery having arrived at Cuttack with some light mountain guns, the Commissioner induced Major Bates to send him to Sambalpur with the guns and another company. This officer hurried up by forced marches, and was in time to take part in an expedition which Captain Knocker made against Khindā and Kolābirā. In the latter place, which he reached on the 5th November, he destroyed the house of the *gaontiā*; but he failed to capture Surendra Sāi and his brother at Khindā, though he found their houses loopholed and prepared for defence. In only one place (Jhārghāti) did he find any large gathering of armed men, and their numbers were concealed by the jungle.

Matters had now assumed a serious aspect. Many of the principal zamīndārs were collecting their *paiks* for the purpose of resisting the Government, and the whole country in the neighbourhood of Sambalpur was temporarily in the hands of the insurgents, who were posted in strength at a distance of not more than 3 or 4 miles from the station, and nightly fired on our pickets. Dr. Moore of the Madras Army, who had been ordered to proceed with Mr. Hanson to afford medical aid to the troops at Sambalpur, was murdered while on the march, his companion escaping and wandering about in the jungle without food until rescued by a party of Sebundis sent out by Captain Leigh. Captain Leigh himself marched out with a considerable body of the Madras corps to support the Sebundis, but was attacked by the rebels under cover of dense jungle, and lost several of his men without being able to retaliate.

By the beginning of December the *dāk* road to Bombay was obstructed; two of the *dāk* stations had been burnt down, while large bodies were collecting in various directions and committing excesses of all sorts. Mr. Cockburn, the Commissioner of Orissa, now despatched to Sambalpur the remainder of the 40th Madras Native Infantry, under the command of Major Bates, and with him the guns and artillerymen stationed at Cuttack. Meanwhile the Lieutenant-Governor authorized the formation of two companies of Sebundis for service in the district under Captain Bird of the 40th Madras Native Infantry and made a strong representation to the Government of India, in consequence of which orders were sent to the Government of Madras to take immediate measures for strengthening Sambalpur. It was also decided to transfer Sambalpur temporarily to the Orissa Division, owing to the difficulty of access from the north and the heavy amount of work which pressed on the Commissioner of Chotā Nāgpur. Mr. Cockburn, who had been practically in charge of the district for some time before, assumed official charge on the 19th December, and proceeded at once to Sambalpur, accompanied by a wing of the 5th Madras Native Infantry under Major Wyndham, and by a detachment of artillery under Captain Ellywn of the Madras Artillery, arriving there on the 20th January.

In the meantime, Captain Wood had arrived at Sambalpur from Nāgpur, with a squadron of the Nāgpur Irregular Horse. On the 30th December he marched out with 73 of his own cavalry 150 of the 40th Madras Native Infantry, and 50 of the Rāmgarh Battalion; and having surprised the enemy in a grove of trees, charged down on them with his cavalry, while the infantry came up in time to complete the rout. Captain Wood, who killed three of the enemy with his own hand alone, was wounded by an arrow. Surendra Sāi again managed to effect his escape, but his brother, Chhabilo *alias* Chhailo Sāi was killed. Early in January Major Bates arrived at Sambalpur and assumed command of all the troops in the district. He at once proceeded to force the Jhārghāti pass, which was held by Udwant Sāi, destroyed the breastwork which had been thrown up, and seized a quantity of arms and ammunition. He next destroyed the village of Kolābirā, which had been a nest of rebels, and shortly afterwards the *gaontiā* and thirteen of the most influential men gave themselves up. The estate was confiscated, and the *gaontiā* convicted of treason and hanged. A less successful sortie was made by Captain Leigh, who marched out with a small force but was unable to dislodge the rebels, who, to the number of about 1,500, were strongly posted on a hill, protected by dense jungle and stone barricades.

Shortly afterwards the Singhorā pass on the road to Nāgpur was forced by Captain Shakespear, who, with a small force of Nāgpur cavalry, successfully attacked the insurgents. Captain Wood and Captain Woodbridge were sent out with detachments to occupy this position, but on the 12th February Captain Woodbridge was shot while marching on a post held by the rebels at Pahārsirgirā. On this, all the rank and file were seized with panic and fled, with the exception of two sepoys of the Rāmgarh Battalion, both of whom were wounded in an attempt to recover Captain Woodbridge's body. Two days later Ensign Warlow attacked the position, and driving the enemy off, recovered Captain Woodbridge's body. He found them very strongly posted in a defile between two hills covered with jungle. Across the entrance of the defile they had erected a wall seven feet high and thirty feet long. Half way up the hill on the left was another stonework, which commanded the one in front, while on the crest of the pass was a third barricade. For some considerable distance in front they had cleared away the jungle, so that the troops in advancing would be exposed to their full fire and have no cover. Ensign Warlow, however, threw out two flanking parties to his right and left, while a third was to advance up the gorge and deliver a frontal attack as soon as the other two parties should be engaged. The enemy, seeing their position turned, fled without offering any resistance.

Vigorous measures were also taken by detachments sent out to various parts of the district; but they were hampered by the nature of the country, its dense jungles and almost inaccessible hills, which afforded cover and a ready retreat for the insurgents. A successful attack was, however, made by Captain Nicholls, of the 5th Native Infantry, on a position in the Bārapahār hills supposed to be inaccessible to regular troops. The rebels were driven from their fastness, and a store of provisions was taken.

Towards the end of February 1858 tranquillity began to be restored. The rebels were being hunted down in all directions, and among those captured were some of the zamīndārs who had been principally concerned in closing the roads to Cuttack and Calcutta. Three central posts for the regular troops, and eleven subordinate outposts for men of the Rāmgarh Battalion and the recently raised Sebundis, were established by Mr. Cockburn. He then returned to Cuttack, after making arrangements for the security of the district, confiscating the estates of insurgent zamīndārs, and warning the friendly zamīndārs against harbouring rebels. His presence was no longer required at Sambalpur, ofr Colonel Foster, who had been invested with the chief civil and

military authority in the district, arrived at the end of March, and was soon able to report that he could dispense with the services of all but his own regiment and the Sebundis. For further assistance he relied upon the contingents of the local Rājās, who were now, he said, willing and anxious to support his authority and afford aid in the restoration of peace and order.

Surendra Sāi, the ringleader of the rebels, still remained at large, and for four years troops were employed in every direction, trying to hunt him down and disperse his band, but without success. The most daring atrocities were committed by him, and he terrorized the country, any villager who dared to give or offer assistance to Government, being murdered with his family and his village fired and plundered. The royal proclamation of amnesty failed to win his submission, but at last some of the chiefs were detached from Surendra Sāi by the conciliatory policy adopted by Major Impey, who was placed in charge of Sambalpur in 1861 in subordination to the Commissioner of Orissa. He offered a free pardon and restitution of confiscated property to all rebels with the exception of Surendra Sāi, his son Mitra Bhānu Sāi, and his brother Udwant Sāi; and this offer induced many of the rebel chiefs who had been out since 1857 to surrender. Some of the most trusted adherents of Surendra Sāi, such as Hāthi Singh and his brother Kunjal Singh of Ghes, Kamal Singh Dāo and Khageswar Dāo (descendants of Balbhadra Dāo, the former rebel zamīndār of Lakhanpur) still obstinately refused to submit unless he was made Rājā of Sambalpur. When, however, Surendra Sāi saw many of the chiefs being reinstated, and found also that fresh troops were being sent to hunt him down, he resolved to listen to the overtures of the Deputy Commissioner. He at first attempted to stipulate that, if he did give himself up, he should be made Rājā; but at last, seeing that the authorities intended to pardon him if he came in, yielded himself up in May 1862. Strange to say, his captains, Kunjal Singh, Kamal Singh, and one or two others, refused to surrender even then. One of the last excuses made by Surendra Sāi was that Kamal Singh's band would not let him surrender unless he paid them a certain sum of money. This statement was fully believed by Major Impey, and he actually sent Rs. 500 to Surendra Sāi to distribute amongst Kamal Singh's followers, who were then in open rebellion.

CLOSE OF THE REBELLION.

For some time after the surrender of Surendra Sāi the country remained quiet. The rebel family had handsome stipends and several villages settled on them, and those who had been instrumental in procuring their submission were also liberally rewarded.

On this ground alone, one Loknāth Pandā, a Brāhman, who had two or three villages only, and who was very nearly hanged in 1857 for being one of the first to join Surendra Sāi in the rebellion, was constituted a chief, and 19 *khālsa* villages were made over to him, assessed at half rates for a period of 40 years. Mrityunjaya Pānigrāhi, another shrewd Brāhman, was also rewarded on similar grounds. In short, the authorities seemed to think that nothing was too much to give to the men who were considered to have achieved the pacification of the country, which had been a prey to rebellion and bloodshed without intermission for five years.

Early in 1863, however, fresh political upheavings commenced to be felt. Sambalpur had recently been incorporated with the Central Provinces, and the first visit of the Chief Commissioner, Mr. (afterwards Sir R.) Temple, was made an opportunity for reviving the old demand for the restoration of native rule. A petition was got up purporting to be from the landholders, Brāhmans, and influential people of Sambalpur, setting forth that they had been much harassed by the introduction of stamps, taxes, etc.; that there were still rebel zamīndārs in the hills, whose depredations they dreaded; but that if Surendra Sāi was made Rājā, all would be well, and the Government, in place of losing by the country, might demand a heavy tribute. Nothing was obtained by the petition, and it appears highly probable that it was engineered by Surendra Sāi and his advisers, the names of many landholders and influential inhabitants having been affixed to it without their knowledge or consent.

Shortly after the Chief Commissioner's departure, affairs began to get more serious. Kamal Singh and his gang again appeared on the scene, and began committing savage outrages in the *khālsa* villages. No less than 15 or 16 dacoities took place in six weeks, and a threatening letter was sent to the Deputy Commissioner warning him that the country would know no peace until Surendra Sāi's rights were recognized. It became evident that Surendra Sāi was still bound up with Kamal Singh and other rebel leaders. By degrees some dangerous plots and intrigues were discovered distinctly proving that the surrender of Surendra Sāi in 1862 was merely a blind, and that he had never for a moment intended to abandon the object of his life, viz., the recovery of the Sambalpur Rāj.

Major Impey died at Sambalpur in December 1863, but not before he had fully recognized the critical position of affairs and the necessity for arresting Surendra Sāi and his immediate relations and adherents. Circumstances, however, prevented their arrest until the 23rd January 1864, when it was successfully

effected by the Deputy Commissioner assisted by a few European officers stationed at the station. It was not legally proved that Surendra Sāi was preparing to wage war against the Government, but the Chief Commissioner and the Supreme Government recognized the necessity for keeping him, with certain of his relations and adherents, in confinement as dangerous political offenders. Dacoity then ceased, and profound peace succeeded the dangerous and critical period preceding his capture.

It is reported that, of those arrested, Lokhnāth Pandā of Rāmpelā and Mrityunjaya Pānigrāhi of Ardā died in jail, while Padnāth Guru was acquitted on appeal and returned to Sambalpur. After remaining for some time in prison, Surendra Sāi and his brother Udwant Sāi were released on condition that they remained at Raipur, where Udwant Sāi died and Surendra Sāi became blind. Mitra Bhānu Sāi, the son of Surendra Sāi, was released on the surety of his father-in-law, the Rājā of Bonai, and in 1907 the Government of India passed orders permitting him to return to Khindā.

ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES.

Few districts have been affected by so many administrative changes as Sambalpur. After the cession by the Marāthās in 1817, though the direct rule rested with the Rājā, a general power of control was reserved for the British authorities, and soon after the accession of the last Rājā (1833) the State was placed under the Agent of the Governor-General for the South-West Frontier. This Agency, it may be explained, was called into existence by Regulation XIII of 1833 after the suppression of the Kol rebellion of 1831-32, and at first comprised the greater part of what is now the Chotā Nāgpur Division, but subsequently Sambalpur, with other Tributary States, was added to it. In 1849 Sambalpur came under the direct rule of the British, and was administered by an officer styled the Principal Assistant of the Agent for the South-West Frontier, the latter having his headquarters at Rānchī. This arrangement continued till 1860, with a change in the titles of officers; for in 1854 the designation of the Agent of the South-West Frontier was changed to Commissioner of Chotā Nāgpur, and that of the Principal Assistant to Senior Assistant Commissioner. In 1860 Sambalpur was transferred to the Orissa Division of Bengal, and by a notification of the 30th April 1862 it was made over to the newly constituted Central Provinces. In October 1905 the bulk of the district was retransferred to the Province of Bengal.

For some years past the Central Provinces had experienced such difficulties with the administration, owing to the ethnical and linguistic differences between it and other districts, that the

Chief Commissioner in 1901 had asked to be relieved of the district altogether. Although the Government of India were then unable to comply with his request, they were obliged to rescind a previous decision of 1895, which had proved unworkable in practice, and to restore Oriyā as the court language of Sambalpur. The transfer of Sambalpur was again urged upon the Government of India in 1904 by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Sir Andrew Fraser, K.C.S.I. In the letter expressing his views it was stated:—"The greatest administrative inconvenience has been experienced, inasmuch as there is no other part of the Central Provinces where Oriyā is spoken. It is necessary therefore for the officers of Government who are sent to administer the Sambalpur district to acquire the Oriyā language for their service in that district only. Native officers have to acquire the language as well as Europeans; they are very much averse to coming down to Sambalpur for a short term of service when that requires the acquisition of a new language; and Sambalpur has become mainly on that account what may be called a penal district in the Central Provinces. Again the subordinate staff has to be manned by persons talking Oriyā; that means that it is practically impossible to transfer officials with any freedom from Sambalpur to any other part of the Province, or from any other district to Sambalpur. The natural result is that the administration of the Sambalpur district, in respect at least of its subordinate officers, is both more inefficient and more corrupt than that of any other district in the Province. It was this great administrative difficulty which led to the abolition of Oriyā as the court language in Sambalpur, and the substitution of Hindī, by one of the Chief Commissioners. Experience proved almost immediately that this was a measure that could not be supported. The people in the interior know Oriyā, and do not know Hindī. They stand by their mother tongue; and they felt the pressure which was brought to bear upon them to adopt Hindī as a great grievance and oppression. The revenue, criminal and even civil administration suffered mainly from the fact that it was conducted in a language practically unknown to the people. Sir Andrew Fraser, therefore, when he was Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, obtained the sanction of the Government of India to restore the Oriyā language in Sambalpur, and proposed as the best means of meeting the administrative evil, of the gravity of which he was thoroughly sensible, to transfer the Sambalpur district to the Orissa Division. He holds the same views still."*

* Papers relating to the Reconstitution of the Provinces of Bengal and Assam (Simla, 1904).

This recommendation was accepted by the Government of India, and accordingly, when in 1905 a redistribution of territory was decided upon, the district (with the exception of the Chandarpur-Padampur estate and the Phuljhar zamīndāri) was transferred from the Central Provinces to the Orissa Division of Bengal.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER II.

SAMBALPUR IN 1766.

The first visit of an European to Sambalpur, of which there is any published account, is described in *A Narrative of a Journey to the Diamond Mines at Sumbhulpoor in the Province of Orissa*, by Mr. T. Motte, published in the Asiatic Annual Register for 1799. The journey was undertaken under the orders of Lord Clive, to whom the Rājā had sent a messenger, Sardār Khān, with a rough diamond as a sample and an invitation to send an agent to purchase diamonds on the spot. Lord Clive eagerly accepted this offer, as he wished to use diamonds as a convenient means of transmitting money to England and also thought it a good opportunity to open up negotiations with the Marāthās. The agent whom he selected was Mr. Motte, who describes his instructions as follows:—"His Lordship being then at a great loss for means of remitting money to England, proposed to me to return with the vakeel to the mines, and to endeavour to open the diamond trade. He offered to make it a joint concern, in which I was to hold a third, he the other two; all the expenses to be borne by the concern. The proposal dazzled me, and I caught at it without reflecting on the difficulties of the march, or on the barbarity of a country in which Mr. Mallock, sent by Mr. Henry Vansittart for the same purpose, durst only stay twenty-four hours. His Lordship instructed me to make what inquiries I could into the state of the Mahrattas, supposing that a Government connected by such very slight ties might be easily divided, and, by such division, that the power of a people so formidable in India might be weakened. He directed me also to sound whether he would not cede the province of Orissa for an annual tribute, and thereby give a contiguity to the British dominions in India, which would strengthen them greatly."

Mr. Motte left Calcutta on the 13th March 1766, taking with him a companion (Mr. Raby), an European servant, 3 horses, 2 camels, 3 tents, 30 native servants and 26 sepoys. He proceeded through Midnapore and Balasore to Cuttack, which he

reached on the 6th May. Here he had an interview with the Marāthā Governor, Bhawānī Pandit, who suspected that the mission to Sambalpur was merely a blind, and that he had been sent by Lord Clive "to form alliances with the mountaineers, through whose territories my road lay." Mr. Motte then laid before him Clive's proposal that Orissa should be handed over to the Company, "who should pay a stipulated sum and send a resident to the Court of Nagpoor as an hostage. Bowanee Pundit was too good a statesman not to comprehend the use which might be made of an alliance with the English. He caught the idea with the vivacity of a Mahratta, told me the interests of his court and ours were the same, that he would write what he had said to Jannoojei, and desired me to write to Lord Clive. Business being finished, he became extremely cheerful, supplied me with guides and promised me every assistance."

Mr. Motte left Cuttack on the 10th May, and after marching to the south of the Mahānadī through Bānki, Khandparā and Daspallā, made his way through the Barmūl pass into Baud, where he was overtaken by a message from Bhawānī Pandit that his master Janojī must give up all thoughts of an alliance with the British at present, as he had been defeated and his capital, Nāgpur, taken by the Peshwā Mādho Rao. On the 28th May, 2½ months after he left Calcutta, Mr. Motte entered the Sambalpur territory, and here his troubles began. On the 29th the messenger whom he sent to announce his arrival returned with the news that the Rājā Ajit Singh was dead, and had been succeeded by his son "Obbi Singh" (Ubhaya Singh). He was directed to march to "Monisur," a place 5 miles from Sambalpur; and having done so, he encamped in a pleasant grove. But next morning there was a severe storm. The baggage tent, in which the sepoys and servants sought shelter, was struck by lightning, the ammunition stored there exploded, and the tent was set on fire. The sentry on guard was killed, and nine of the men died before morning and seven the next day. The situation in which he now found himself and his subsequent adventures are described by Mr. Motte as follows:—

"My situation was at this time truly critical. I was entering a place so remarkable for perfidy, that Captain Mallock durst not stay twenty-four hours in it; with a body reduced extremely low by a nervous fever, and no medical assistance at hand. The sepoys and other servants, on whom I depended for protection against secret treachery, but which, in their best state, were insufficient to guard against open violence, instead of

marching in good spirits, were obliged to be carried on a hurdle on the heads of two men; for almost all my people were burnt, several of whom died after I entered the town. These circumstances presented to me in all their terrors; but the state I found things in at Sumbhulpoor prevented many of the bad effects. Jite Sing, one of the rajah's natural brothers, came to congratulate me on my arrival in the Sumbhulpoor territories. He was shocked at the sight of my maimed people, and supplied me with labourers, who placed their bedding on hurdles, and carried them into the town like dead bodies. My entrance appeared rather like a funeral, than the conclusion of a successful march. The distance was only five miles to the place the rajah had pitched on for me to reside in; it was an outwork which had been added to the town in the manner of a ravelin. It formed an irregular triangle, two hundred yards in circumference, defended on two sides by a deep ditch and high mud wall, and covered towards the town by a mud wall ten feet high. The part allotted for me was surrounded also by a mud wall and contained two sheds used before as stables, which I gave up to the sick, pitching my tents for myself and those in health, until I could build a thatched house. I found the town in great confusion on account of the state of the Government ever since the death of the late rajah. To explain this more fully, I shall give the history of the last three years.

"In the year 1763, Ajeet Sing was rajah, and Deccan Roy dewan. This man, taking advantage of his master's indolence, acquired such an ascendancy, that he directed every thing according to his own will and pleasure. At length the rajah's wife roused him, by representing the extreme dependence of his situation. The rajah privately raised a party; for the dewan had obtained grants of so many villages, that his master durst not attack him openly. Assassination best suited the spirit of the government. The cowardice of the rajah, and the genius of the people, who were sensible that, in the midst of the disturbances consequent to such an act of treachery, the plunder of the dead and of many houses would fall to their share, came readily into the plan; and Ajeet Sing on the 16th of June, ordered the public hall to be cleared of everybody except Deccan Roy, on pretence that the Ranny would pass through it in her way to a temple, whither she was to pay her devotions, and would then speak to him. The dewan, not suspecting any violence, sat waiting for her, when eight or ten ruffians who had been concealed for the purpose, rushed out and cut him to pieces. This was the signal for plundering his house, which the populace instantly

did; and when the rajah sent a party to secure his share of the booty, they found nothing left. Peelo Roy was the principal actor in this tragedy; but Kascree, who had charge of the rajah's household, jealous lest he should become his master, by being appointed dewan, persuaded Ajeet Sing to keep that post vacant, sensible that when the rajah's indolent fit should come on, the administration of affairs would fall into his hands; and he judged right: for no sooner did Morpheus shed his poppies on his master's head, than Kascree became as powerful as ever Deccan Roy had been. But Peelo Roy, sensible that Kascree had stood between him and the desired post, did not suffer him to enjoy his master's favour long. He employed a villain, who cleft his skull as he was passing through the gateway of the rajah's palace. Peelo Roy, having thus removed the chief obstacle, was appointed dewan, and Ajeet Sing sunk into his usual insignificance.

"In the year 1764, Akber, a relation of Kascree, finding Peelo Roy's advance was incompatible with his safety, represented to Ajeet Sing how shameful it was that he, who had shaken off the fetters of so wise a man as Deccan Roy, should submit to be ruled by such a wretch as Peelo Roy. This representation had such an effect, that the rajah gave Akber a private order to murder him; however, the dewan being on his guard, no opportunity offered, until 27th August, a great holiday, when all the principal people of the town being assembled in the public hall with the rajah, at the dances exhibited on the occasion, and Peelo Roy retiring, Akber dispatched two or three ruffians after him, who murdered him as he was pressing through the crowd. In an instant the hall was cleared, every one running with the greatest alacrity to plunder his house. Akber succeeded to all the influence of his predecessor, and continued until the death of his master. Ajeet Sing died in the beginning of May 1766, not without strong suspicion of poison. It appeared he had resolved to destroy Akber, and on his death-bed, recommended the destruction of him to his son, Obbi Sing. His son, therefore, as soon as the funeral of the father was over, refused to return him the seal, but gave it to Kissun Bur Mullic. Akber, being commander of the troops in the capital, retired to his own house, which was in the midst of the town, where he fortified himself. In this state was the country when I arrived.

"On the 2nd June I paid the rajah a visit, being introduced by Jite Sing. Kissun Bur Mullic officiated as his minister. He told me his master would enter on business with me immediately. He complained much of the insolence of Akber, in defying his

master in his capital; and gave a hint that he expected my assistance. I heard all, but said little. The rajah, Obbi Sing, was sixteen years of age, looked very stupid; his eldest natural brother, who had the command of the troops, was haughty and impetuous; his other brother, Jite Sing, of a sweet, open disposition. The rajah returned my visit, but scarce spoke two words, though he seemed pleased with the presents I gave him. They consisted of two pieces of velvet, four of broadcloth, a fusee, a brace of pistols, a spying glass, and some other trifles. The next night Kissun Bur Mullic came, and represented to me that the principal objection to entering on business was the distracted state of the town, on account of the rebellion of Akber; and hinted a wish that I would assist him in seizing him. I excused myself from giving my advice, as not being master of the subject, and my assistance, by shewing the terrible condition of the small force I brought with me.

"The town became daily more confused by mobs and riots, insomuch that I forbade any of my servants to go out of my quarters in the night; but my poor cook, disobeying that order, was next morning found murdered in the street. Matters came to a crisis on the 17th of June, at night, when Akber having collected his people, marched from his own house to the palace, secured the person of the rajah, and murdered every one who offered to oppose him. A massacre followed in the town, where three hundred of the dependents of Kissun Bur Mullic were put to death. I doubled my guards, and kept all my people together. There were in the rajah's service two Germans and two Frenchmen, who were employed in taking care of his guns; the two former were killed in the palace; the two latter, making their escape to me, were protected. My steward, having straggled in the morning, was seized by Akber's people, and carried before him, who, without ceremony, ordered him to be put to death. The news flew to me. I sent a man, acquainting Akber that I had as yet taken no part in the disputes; but that if he did not instantly release my servant, I would march my sepoys, and join the rajah's brothers, who were then defending themselves in their houses. This threat had the desired effect; the steward was sent to me, so frightened, that he was not in his senses. Akber was appointed dewan, and confined Kissun Bur Mullic in a dungeon, the entrance to which was by a trap door, whereon Akber always slept. In a country thus torn by dissensions, I had little prospect of doing any business; but the rains being set in, I could not return by land, nor could I get boats to transport me by water: so that I was obliged to sit down as contented as I could.

"As soon as Akber had established himself firmly in the Dewanee, I entered into a conversation with him in respect to the diamond trade; and here a great difficulty occurred; for Surdar Khan, who had returned with me, had reported to the dewan that he had delivered the diamond to Lord Clive, who had sent me to settle the price and pay for it. I had not brought more money with me than was necessary to pay my expenses, but had established a credit at Cuttac, whither I could send whenever it was necessary. This was a prudent precaution; for if I had had the money with me, Akber had undoubtedly plundered me, and paid himself. I answered that the diamond had been valued by the vakeel at 3,500 rupees, which sum I was ready to pay. He insisted on 6,000 rupees, and went away disgusted. I was a good deal surprised the next day to find that a proclamation was issued, that no person should supply me or my people with any provisions, nor have any conversation with us. This was a whimsical order, to be sure; however, I put as good a face on it as I could, and acquainted the dewan by message, that my sepoys would bear anything but starving; that if his subjects refused to take their money for provisions, I could not prevent their taking them by force. This matter was decided, like most other critical situations, by a circumstance which had nothing to do with it. Akber wanting a sum of money for other purposes, withdrew the prohibition, and sent me a few more diamonds, the price of which we settled and for which I paid him, having sent for the money from Cuttac.

"The above bears the appearance of a gasconade, but I was sensible Akber was by no means firmly established; for the rajah's two brothers maintained themselves in their houses, nor durst the dewan enter the quarter of the town they inhabited; whereas civil messages passed between them and me. Besides, my sepoys being recovered and trained, formed a respectable body on the parade. Being now reconciled to Government, I requested permission to go on to the places where the diamonds were found, but the minister made many scruples. He first said, that the river was so full, there was nothing to be seen; next, that the country was unsettled, the manners of the inhabitants of those parts so rude in their disposition, so mischievous, they were not to be trusted. I persisted; and after various evasions, catching him at length in a good humour, obtained his consent. He gave me his son-in-law as a guide, and a party of archers as a guard; for I was not willing to carry the sepoys, lest the novelty of their appearance should cause an alarm.

"I set out with Mr. Raby and a few servants, the 16th July. We travelled that day ten miles on the banks of the Maha Nuddee river, in which I frequently saw rocks peeping above the water, and halted at night at the foot of the hills. The next morning, having marched three miles, we passed the side of a rock which projected into the great river, and came to the mouth of the river Hebe, where the diamonds are found. A servant of the rajah, who had charge of this rich spot, met us with only three attendants. A countenance naturally morose, a voice studiously rough, and sentences affectedly short, with a desire of looking formidable, joined to form one of the most disagreeable human creatures I ever saw. Raby was so much out of humour with him, as to propose to me to beat him into good manners; but this brute expressed much surprise at the curiosity which brought me hither; and, after I had worked him into good humour by a present of two yards of scarlet broadcloth, became more communicative.

"He told me it was his business to search in the river Hebe, after the rains, for red earth washed down from the mountains, in which earth diamonds were always found. I asked him if it would not be better to go on the mountains and dig for that earth. He answered it had been done, until the Mahrattas extorted a tribute from the country; and to do so now would only increase that tribute. He shewed me several heaps of the red earth, some pieces of the size of small pebbles, and so on, till it resembles coarse brick-dust, which had been washed and the diamonds taken out. I was desirous of going towards the source of the river, but my guide told me it was impracticable during the rainy season. Where the Hebe river discharges itself into the Maha Nuddee, it is 200 yards wide. I went into it in a boat, and found a bay, near a mile in diameter, the banks of which were overshadowed by thick underwood. I with great labour got the boat forward about two miles to where the river poured from the mountains; then, convinced that what my guide had told me was true, I returned, not a little dissatisfied.

"On my return from this place, I paid a visit to the Naik Buns, the great snake worshipped by the mountainous rajahs, which they say is coeval with the world, which at his decease will be at an end. His habitation was the cavern at the foot of a rock, at the opening of which was a plain of 400 yards, surrounded by a moat. I understood he generally came out once a week, against which time such as make religious vows carry, kids or fowls, and picquet them on the plain. About nine in the morning his appearance was announced to me; I stood on the banks of

the moat opposite the plain. He was unwieldy, thicker in proportion to his length than snakes usually are, and seemed of that species the Persians call Ajdha. There was a kid and some fowls picqueted for him. He took the kid in his mouth, and was some time squeezing his throat to force it down, while he threw about his tail with much activity. He then rolled along to the moat, where he drank and wallowed in the mud. He returned to his cavern. Mr. Raby and I crossed the water in the afternoon, and supposed, from his print in the mud, his diameter to be upwards of two feet.*

"A few days after I returned from this trip, Raby was seized with the fever of the country. We sat down to tea in the afternoon, when he looked and talked very wildly. I took him by the hand, felt him in a strong fever, and advised him to go to bed, from whence he never rose, but to the hour of his death, on the third day, continued light-headed. Charles Smith, my European servant, died with the same symptoms. When I read the funeral service over him, I could not but seriously reflect there was no one left to perform the same duty over me. Having now no European with me, I wished to leave a place where I was likely to do no business; but the rain prevented me. I found the people of the country tampered with my sepoys, and prevailed on one of them to desert. Conscious I was in their power, I thought it best to put a confidence in them. I paid them to the end of July; then mustering all my eloquence, I contrasted to them the horrors of the country we were in with the charms of that we had left; and told them the only chance of ever seeing that dear country again, rested on their adherence to me; that I should conduct them thither as soon as the season would permit. They were struck with my frankness, unanimously declared a perfect confidence in me, and not a man deserted afterwards. My time grew daily more burthensome, and I looked with anxiety for the day when I should leave Sumbhulpoor, where I was obliged to be always upon my guard.

"The beginning of September, Baboo Khan, detached by Jannoojie to the assistance of Bowanee Pundit, encamped near Sumbhulpoor with 300 cavalry. He demanded forage and money of the rajah; but not being supplied immediately, blocked up the town, and threatened to attack it. He applied to me. I advised Akber to dispatch him as soon as possible, and cautioned Baboo Khan not to attack the part of the town I was in, where I

* Lieutenant Kittoe, who visited Sambalpur in 1838, said he was informed that this reptile was still in existence and that "the diamond washers make offerings, if they neglect which, they suppose their search will be fruitless."

had put two guns I found into good order. The rajah delaying, Baboo Khan resolved to attack. He armed an elephant with a wooden shield on his forehead, from whence projected a strong iron spike. The driver, who was protected by a large wooden shield, attempted to drive him against one of the gates, in order to force it open; but the rajah's people, throwing a great quantity of fireworks from the gate, frightened the beast, so that he could not be brought to the charge. A few days after, Baboo Khan marched.

"At length, at the end of September the clouds, which had covered the tops of the mountains from the time the rain set in, dispersed themselves, and the season was pronounced at an end. I prepared for my departure. The first of October, the rajah came to see me, and begged everything he saw; and it was with great difficulty I could save my compass. On the 2nd, in the morning, I went to take leave of him. He and Akber made great professions of their attachment to the English, and of their desire of being dependent on them; at parting he presented me with a rough diamond set in a ring. I believe they were all glad to part with me; for the rajah and his brothers were convinced I would not assist in turning out the dewan, while Akber feared I would change my mind. I marched in the afternoon through the town and suburbs, and encamped at the rajah's garden, three miles beyond it. Some of the principal people waited upon me in the evening, and advised me to be on my guard against the treachery of Akber, who had sent a force after me to cut me off. I answered, in such case Lord Clive would send forces to revenge my death, by destroying all the country with fire and sword.

"I was not alarmed by these insinuations, but at the same time took every precaution. I kept near the banks of the river, and embarked such part of my baggage as I had not immediate occasion for in boats. I armed all my servants with spears. I took into my service twenty men, inhabitants of Balasore, with match-locks. I rose at four, sent on my breakfast apparatus, which I ordered to be prepared at Garey. The tents were struck, and thirteen sepoys were sent with them; the kitchen furniture followed, and after it the rest of the sepoys. As soon as they were at a little distance, I mounted my horse, or got into my palankeen, attended by the match-lock men. I passed all my people, and came to the breakfast table, where I sat till all my people passed me again. I then pushed by them; and, going through several cultivated spots, came to the village Whoamah; and ordered the tents to be pitched in a grove without the town,

Whoamah is a large village on the banks of the Maha Nuddee, surrounded with a live bamboo fence. The commander would not suffer any of my people to go into the town, nor would he come to see me; but he sent shopkeepers with necessaries to sell to me. In the evening they all returned into the town; and although I did not like the sullenness of the commander, yet, as I found it was tempered with fear, I was under no apprehensions. The march on 4th October was through a mountainous uncultivated country. Twelve miles from Whoamah I passed the bounds of the province of Sumbhulpoor."

The general result of his mission is described by Mr. Motte as follows. "I now contemplate, that, after so perilous a journey, I had carried no one point I wished; but having resided during the most unwholesome season among a perfidious people, thought myself happy in having escaped with my life. The opening of the diamond trade was prevented by the indolence of the inhabitants, and by their wretched dependence on the Mahrattas. The alliance with Jannoojei was obstructed by the very critical situation of his affairs, and by the distracted state of his family. The very severe illness Lord Clive laboured under, prevented him from pursuing the plan for the cession of Orissa, though he entered on it with great alacrity; and the only satisfaction I had, was a promise to be employed in the negociation, should it ever be resumed."

Mr. Motte also gives the following account of the Sambalpur State at the time of his visit. "The Sumbhulpoor province is so called from its capital; but the rajah takes the title of Rajah of eighteen forts. The province extends from latitude 20° 50 to 22° 15′ north, and from longitude 83° 20′ to 84° 50′. It is bounded to the west by the countries of Boora Shumbur and Rottunpoor; to the east by Bimbera, Lundacole and Boad: to the south by Patna and Coondon; to the north by Gungpoor and Soorgooja. The air of Sumbhulpoor is very unwholesome, owing to the great vicissitudes of heat and cold; for the valleys, the only inhabited parts, are impenetrable to the breezes, which, during the hot season, render the torrid zone tolerable, while, if a shower comes, such a piercing wind comes with it from the mountains, that I have, within twenty-four hours, felt the weather hotter and colder than I ever felt it in Bengal within twelve months. This makes the inhabitants subject to rheumatisms, and this occasioned every person I carried with me to be affected with violent fevers. The soil in the valleys is rich loam, in which grain or pulse thrive well. Yet rice is the principal grain cultivated, because the harvest of it is over before

January, when the Mahrattas overrun the country. The mountains abound with gold and diamonds; but the natives are deterred from working the mines by their indolence and fear of the Mahrattas, to whom their riches would only point them out as a more desirable prey. They are, therefore, content to wash the sands of the rills which descend from them: nor is the quantity of gold they procure thereby despicable.

"The ordinary revenues of the country are paid in kind, and the regulation of the collections is simple. Each village being rated at a certain number of measures of paddy, or rice, in the chaff, the ground is divided among the inhabitants in this manner. Every man, as soon as he is of proper age, is enrolled as a soldier, and allowed half a measure (about six pounds) of rice per day for his subsistence, and three rupees per annum for clothing. As much arable land is then made over to him as is supposed to produce $242\frac{1}{8}$ measures. He is to deliver to the rajah, or his order, $60\frac{5}{8}$ measures, and the remainder is for his own use. The land is given in charge to his wife, who feeds him, and provides for paying the rent; if the ground produces more than it is rated at, it is her profit; if less, her loss. The reserved rent of three or four villages, being one-fourth the produce of the land, is applied to the use of the rajah's household. The reserved rent of the rest is given to his relations, or principal servants, who by these means have all the inhabitants dependent on them. The extraordinary revenues consist of duties on merchants and others passing through the country, and of fines. The former are not settled, but depend on the conscience of the rajah; and indeed, within three years, since his people robbed and murdered a considerable Nagpoor merchant near this place, none have passed this way. The latter, also, are entirely arbitrary; nor is it necessary to find a man guilty of any crime in order to fine him, in a country where money cannot be acquired but by means prejudicial to society.

"The government of Sumbhulpoor is strictly feudal, the fiefs of which being originally official, are, by the weakness of the sovereign, become hereditary. . . . It appears from the history I have given that all the evils attending the feudal system were centered in this government; for such is the danger of degrading a man from an office, that it is seldom effected without murdering him; for, if he can fly to his fief, he is able there to raise an opposition dangerous to the sovereign. The former dewans were possessed of villages at a distance from the capital, and were of course liable to surprise; but Akber the present dewan's power

lay in the capital itself, so that he was mayor of the palace, and made the rajah prisoner at last.

"When they fell under the yoke of the Mahrattas, the oppression of that vile government broke their spirits, and their custom of inactivity became a total aversion to labour. They threw the cultivation of the lands, and all other works of fatigue, on the sex designed by nature for softer toils. The sex, losing that gentle tenderness for which the women of England are famed, lost all the power of pleasing; while the men, becoming worse than brutes, addicted themselves to the most shocking of all vices. I have been more than once requested to join in effecting the destruction of the dewan. Had the women desired my assistance to make a female dewan, I had granted it, since they form evidently the superior sex. So indelicate are the men with respect to the women, that I have been introduced and obliged to show respect to a man of consequence in the morning, whose wife has in the afternoon brought a load of wood of her own cutting, as much as she could stagger under, and sold it me for a penny.

"The natives in general are very abstemious, eating only once in twenty-four hours, and that in the evening. Their meal is then two pounds of rice; and they keep the water in which it has been boiled for drinking the next day; raw water being apt to give them a flux. The men are low in stature, but well made, lazy, treacherous and cruel. But to these ill qualities of the tiger, the Almighty has also, in his mercy, added the cowardice of that animal; for, had they an insensibility of danger, equal to their inclination for mischief, the rest of mankind must unite to hunt them down. They profess themselves Hindus, but practise only that part of the religion which consists of external ceremonies.

"The common disease of the country is a violent fever, the first symptom of which is being light-headed. The doctor first enjoins the patient to vow a sacrifice to Sumbhute, the deity of the place, to expiate her wrath. He then proceeds to exercise the patient gently if his fever be mild, but with greater violence if he be light-headed. They then employ five or six men to hold the patient in a sitting posture, while the doctor jabbers over a form of words, blowing in his face at each period. This provokes him very much: he swears, abuses, and curses horridly; this is all placed to the account of the devil in him. They aggravate his rage by holding a burning horse's hoof, so that all the smoke goes up his nostrils. He grows outrageous, till, quite exhausted by the struggles he makes to extricate himself from

those that hold him, he falls down almost insensible; and a profuse perspiration succeeding, they cover him up close to encourage it, which carries off the fever. He sleeps usually twelve hours, and awakes so much emaciated as is surprising. Thus he is cured of his madness, by means which drive a sane man out of his senses. If the patient is so much exhausted that he cannot struggle, the doctor pronounces the devil to be too much for him.

"I was surprised to find among these people a trace of mechanics which seems to show they have once known them. They use stilliards instead of scales. In every other respect we may say that, if a state of ignorance is a state of nature, the inhabitants of this country are perfect naturals, since they are as naked with respect to rational improvements as when they were born."

CHAPTER III.

THE PEOPLE.

WHEN the first census was taken in 1872, the population of the district, as now constituted, was returned at 392,275 persons. In 1881 the census showed a population of 520,124, but this phenomenal increase (32 per cent.) was far in excess of the natural growth of the people, and there can be no doubt that it was largely due to the incompleteness of the first census. Between 1881 and 1891 the growth of population continued, 619,181 persons being enumerated at the census of 1891. The increase was nearly 19 per cent., the greater part of which occurred in the zamīndāris and should probably be attributed to increased efficiency of enumeration. The result of the census carried out in 1901 was to show that the district contained a population of 638,992, of whom 274,051 were enumerated in the Sambalpur subdivision and 364,941 in the Bargarh subdivision. The increase since the census of 1891 was only 3·2 per cent., and would in all probability have been far larger, had it not been for the famine of 1899-1900, when the reported death-rate rose to the appalling figure of 108·18 per mille, owing chiefly to a severe epidemic of cholera and to the mortality among the crowds of wanderers who flocked into the district from the adjoining States. In spite of this check to the growth of population, there has, according to the census returns, been an increase of no less than 62·89 per cent. since 1872. GROWTH OF POPULATION.

In the district, as a whole, there are 167 persons per square mile, and the density of population is less than in any district in Bengal except Angul and three districts of Chotā Nāgpur, viz., Rānchī, Palāmau and Singhbhūm. The Sambalpur subdivision supports 171 persons per square mile, as against 164 per square mile in the Bargarh subdivision. The difference between the two subdivisions, small as it is, may perhaps be explained by the difference in their physical aspects. The largest open tract of country in the district, and also the most closely cultivated, is found in the Bargarh subdivision south of the Bārapahār hills, where the zamīndāris of Barpāli, Bheran, Kharsal and GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS. Density of population.

Pātkulandā are situated. But a large area is occupied by the uninhabited Bārapahār hills, and to the south and west the country is hilly and covered with jungle. In the Sambalpur subdivision, on the other hand, there are extensive areas of open country, especially in the neighbourhood of the town of Sambalpur and along the northern bank of the Mahānadī, where there is a fairly level tract, most of which is suitable for rice cultivation.

Excluding the Government reserved forests, the zamīndāri reserves and the Mahānadī river, the district supports a population of 215 souls per square mile, and in the area under regular cultivation there are 373 persons per square mile. It is noticeable that in recent years there has been little increase in the density of population in the cultivated area. This is attributed to the fact that the extension of cultivation has been almost commensurate with the growth of population In fact, in the Sambalpur subdivision there has been an actual decrease in the pressure of the people on the soil, because the spread of cultivation has been greater than the increase of population, cultivators having extended their operations from the level plain into the hills and forest villages.

Migration. A notable feature of the census statistics for the last 20 years is that the volume of immigration from the neighbouring districts and States has gradually increased, while the number of emigrants to the neighbouring country has fallen off, though emigrants still outnumber immigrants. Formerly there was an exodus of coolies to the Assam tea gardens, where 11,613 persons from this district were enumerated in 1901. The exploitation of the district for tea garden labour began with the completion of the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway, but seems to be on the decline, the number of registered emigrants falling from 7,712 in 1902-03 to 1,254 and 853 in the two following years, and to 214 in 1905-06 and 64 in 1906-07. On the other hand, it is reported that the decline in the number of labourers going to Assam may have been more apparent than real owing to the existence of unlicensed emigration from Native States, which in all probability affected inhabitants of this district as well. However this may be, it would appear that the exodus to Assam has almost died out, and is not likely to revive in the absence of local famine or of more attractive prospects for labour than are at present offered in Assam. There seems to be, indeed, no reason why any one should emigrate from the district, for it is more prosperous than the districts further east, wages have risen, and the cultivated area is increasing.

"The general tendency," writes the Settlement Officer, "of these movements is favourable to the district. The Assam emigrants are chiefly thriftless aboriginals, and, especially of late years, many of them belong to the criminal classes. The emigrants to the States are also aboriginals, unable or unwilling to compete in cultivation with Hindus. On the other hand, the immigrants, both from Feudatory States and from British districts, are usually steady cultivators, who have been attracted by the light rents of the district and by the opportunities for exploiting forest land. It is true that many of the immigrants date from famine years, but of the crowds who then came in many died, many returned to their homes, and only the fittest labourers survived and settled."

Towns and villages. The only town in the district is Sambalpur, which contains a population of 12,870. The remainder of the population is contained in 1,984 villages, of which thirteen contain over 2,000 inhabitants. Five of these villages are situated in the Sambalpur subdivision, viz., Rāmpelā (4,658), Jharsagurā (4,306), Katarbagā (2,279), Arhāparā (2,233) and Lairā (2,229). The remaining eight are situated in the Bargarh subdivision, viz., Barpāli (4,414), Bargarh (3,609), Kumbhāri (2,668), Remendā (2,565), Torā (2,135), Padampur (2,133), Tāmparsarā (2,091) and Katapāli (2,082).

The most important of these large villages are Rāmpelā, Jharsagurā, Barpāli and Bargarh. Rāmpelā is an agricultural village with a large community of weavers, and is the centre of some trade. The size of Jharsagurā is due to its position at the junction of the Sambalpur branch railway with the main line, and also to a large settlement of grain-dealers established on land acquired by Government for the purpose. Barpāli, the residence of the principal zamīndār of the district, is an old town with a large community of silk-weavers and a considerable trade. Bargarh, the headquarters of the *tahsīl* of the same name, has an important market, which collects and forwards to Sambalpur most of the surplus grain of Pātnā State and the Bargarh plain. There is but little tendency on the part of the rural population to form towns, but rather the contrary, the population increasing most largely in those tracts where most cultivable waste lands are available.

LANGUAGE. Oriyā is the main vernacular of the district, being spoken by no less than 474,367 persons or 74 per cent. of the population.

Oriyā. The Oriyā of Sambalpur is in many ways different from the purer tongue spoken in the sea-board districts of Orissa. This is

due to the fact that Sambalpur was until a recent date largely isolated from the rest of Orissa, and received many linguistic and other impressions from the neighbouring districts of the Central Provinces. Dialectic differences and peculiarities are, indeed, so marked that a person not possessing an intimate knowledge of Oriyā might almost mistake the language of the common people for a new dialect. The peculiarities in the vernacular may perhaps be best illustrated by giving a few selected simple sentences and mentioning some of their divergences from standard Oriyā.

(1) *Bābur buā ketebele āsi āmriba, nāi jāni,* "I do not know when the little boy's father will come." The word *buā* meaning "father" is not used in eastern Orissa; *āmriba*, meaning, with *āsi*, "will arrive," would not be intelligible to the ordinary Oriyā; and the placing of a negative before a verb in *nāi jāni* resembles Hindī. (2) *Nuni ta Misra gharar bui sāngare gote āmba āu gote letir lāgi kalihoi hene je galā? Nihetāl dishbāku,* "My little girl quarrelled with the little girl of a Brāhman's house about an unripe mango and a ripe mango. Where has she gone? She is as yet nowhere to be seen." The words *bui* meaning "a little girl of the Brāhman caste" and *nuni* meaning "a little girl of a non-Brāhman caste" are not ordinary Oriyā; neither is *nihetāl,* which means "not till now." (3) *Mādhba haliā mishā chora bāgir luchlāna. Nāi āibā kāen?* "The ploughman Mādhab has also hidden himself like a thief. Will he not come?" Here Mādhba (a name) is used for Madhab (*cf.* Madna for Madan and *kadli* for *kadali*) while *mishā* (also), *bāgir* (like), *luchlāna* (has hidden himself), *āibā kāen* (will he come?) are all unknown to Oriyā. (4) *Pāin tike juin tike, ke ānbā?* "Who will bring a little water and a little fire?" Here *pāin* is used instead of *pāni* (*cf. māil* and *pāit* for *māli* and *pāti*); and *juin*, meaning fire, is a word which is known neither in Bengal nor Orissa proper, but is used in Assam.

Among other words common to Assam and the Oriyā of Sambalpur, but not known in Bengal, may be mentioned *karchali*, a ladle; *odā*, wet; *guda*, dust or dry grass reduced to dust; *topā*, a drop; and *ofrā*, a cast-off or unnecessary thing. The Oriyās of Sambalpur, again, say *Mu ulgi heuchi*, *i.e.*, "I bow down," and *olag* in Assam means "bowing down;" *phāl* is used, as in Assamese, for a side, *e.g.*, *e phāl, se phāl, i.e.*, "this side or that side;" and the Oriyā *māhāliā* corresponds to the Assamese *māliha*, both meaning "gratis," *e.g.*, one gets a thing *māhāliā* or for nothing.* On the other hand, two forms of the letters *i* and *n* are

* B. C. Mazumdār, *The Bhuiyās*, Modern Review (Allahābād), February 1907.

pronounced as in Bengali, and the pronunciation of *chh* at the end of a word (*e.g.*, *karchhi*) is like that of *sh* in some parts of Eastern Bengal.*

Hindi. Hindī was made the court language in 1896, but, as mentioned in Chapter II, this arrangement having proved unworkable, Oriyā, the mother-tongue of the great majority, was restored in 1903.

Hindī is spoken by 128,345 persons, nearly all of whom use the Chhattīsgarhī dialect of Eastern Hindī, a few only speaking the Baghelī dialect. The latter is the dialect of Baghelkhand, while the former is the vernacular of Chhattīsgarh, being called Lariā, which is merely a local name for Chhattīsgarhī. The difference between Chhattīsgarhī and the other two dialects of Eastern Hindī, Baghelī and Awadhī, is not great. For instance, *is*, the termination of the past tense (*e.g.*, *kāhis*, he said; *māris*, he struck), which is what everybody notices in Chhattīsgarhī, is pre-eminently the typical shibboleth of a speaker of Eastern Hindī, and is commonly heard in Calcutta from servants belonging to Oudh. Dr. Grierson is, indeed, of opinion that if a Chhattīsgarhī speaker was set down in Oudh, he would find himself at home with the language of the locality in a week. The same authority holds that this dialect found its way through Jubbulpore and Mandla, being introduced in comparatively late times by the Aryans who originally settled there. Thenceforward, owing to its geographical isolation, the dialect developed its peculiarities.

Tribal dialects. The principal tribal dialects are (1) Dravidian languages, such as Oraon, Gondī and Kisān, which are spoken by 18,995 persons, (2) Mundā languages, such as Kol or Mundāri, which is used by 8,879 persons, and (3) Khariā used by 4,110 persons. Of these tribal dialects the most important is Oraon or Kurukh. Kisān, as spoken in Sambalpur, has been identified with Korā, the language of a minor Mundā tribe; while Gondī has practically disappeared as a separate language, only 178 persons speaking it at the last census. Kol or Mundāri, on the other hand, is spoken by 93 per cent. of the total Kol population, and Khariā by 93 per cent. of the Khariās.

RELIGIONS. The great majority of the population are Hindus, their number being returned at the last census at 595,790 or 90 per cent. of the population. Practically all the remainder are Animists, who, with a strength of 38,935, represent 6 per cent.

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* I am indebted for the above account of the Oriyā of Sambalpur to Bābu B. C. Mazumdār, B. A., M. R. A. S., of Sambalpur.

of the population. Other religions have few representatives, viz., Muhammadans (3,539), Christians (714) and Jains (14).

Hindu sects.

Among the Hindu sects found in this district three call for special notice, viz., the Kabīrpanthis, Satnāmis and Kumbhipatiās.

Kabīrpanthis.

The Kabīrpanthis, or followers of the path of Kabīr, are a small but increasing sect, numbering 15,668 in 1901 as compared with 11,442 in 1891. The founder of the sect was Kabīr (1380-1420 A.D.), a weaver and Vaishnava reformer, who preached the equality of all men before God, and rejected distinctions of sect, caste and rank. The sect founded by him began, like other reforming sects, by the abolition of caste distinctions, and was, therefore, a schism against Hinduism and the authority of the Brāhmans. It now recognizes caste, and is practically on the same level as any other Hindu sect, the only social result which it produces being that the Kabīrpanthi members of a caste frequently form a separate endogamous division, a fact which is popularly ascribed to their abstaining from meat and liquor. The worship of idols is also prohibited, but practice lags behind precept, and some members of the sect are said to show a tendency to idolatry. The weaving castes, such as the Pankās, are usually Kabīrpanthis, because, it is said, Kabīr was a weaver, and the Brāhmans call it the weavers' religion; but a number of the Aghariās of Sambalpur have also become Kabīrpanthis.

Until recently the head of the sect was the Mahant of Kawardha, but owing to a disputed succession their allegiance is divided and a Mahant living at Kudarmal in Bilāspur enjoys the real homage of most of them.* There is a regular hierarchical organization among the Kabīrpanthis. The chief Mahant appoints a certain number of deputies, called Bhandāris or Mahants, from the more advanced of his followers. These Mahants are spread all over the country, and there are also a number of hereditary lieutenants of the chief *guru* with fixed seats or *gadis* in various parts. There is, moreover, an itinerant order of ascetics, who travel about asking alms and reciting the precepts of their faith.†

Satnāmis.

The Satnāmis are a smaller sect, which in 1901 numbered 1,213 as compared with 116 in 1891. The sect derives its name from the fact that its founder proclaimed the perfect equality of all men and the worship of the one true god under the title of *Satnām* or the true name. It appears to have been introduced in this part of the country between 1820 and 1830 A.D. by a

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* R. V. Russell, *Central Provinces Census Report of 1901*, Part I, p. 84.

B. Robertson, *Central Provinces Census Report of 1891*, Part I, p. 73.

Chamār named Ghāsidās, who retired to the forests of Sonakan in Bilāspur for six months and returned proclaiming himself the recipient of a divine message. He inculcated seven principles, including abstinence from spiritous liquor, meat and certain vegetables, such as lentils and tomatoes, whose juice resembles blood; the abolition of idol worship; the prohibition of the use of cows for ploughing and of working oxen after midday; and the worship of the true name of God alone. Caste was abolished and all men were to be socially equal except the family of Ghāsidās, in which the priesthood of the cult was to be hereditary. His successor was Bālakdās, who was murdered because he exasperated the Brāhmans by assuming the sacred thread.

The sect is practically confined to the Chamārs. Most of them call themselves Satnāmis, but only a few observe the precepts of the sect, abstaining from forbidden food, from the use of tobacco, and from the worship of strange gods. When a Satnāmi Chamār is married a ceremony called *satlok* takes place within three years of the wedding. A feast is given to the caste-people, and during the night the woman retires to the house, and one or more of the men present, who are nominated by her and are called *gurus*, are allowed to go in to her. It is also stated that during his annual progresses it was the practice for the chief *guru*, the successor of Ghāsidās, to be allowed access to any of the wives of the Chamārs whom he might select, and that this was considered rather an honour than otherwise by the husband. The Satnāmis are now becoming ashamed of these customs, and they are gradually being abandoned.*

The Kumbhipatiās are a sect peculiar to Sambalpur, to whom attention was first drawn in 1880, when a party of fanatics went to Purī with the object of burning the idol of Jagannāth. They were residents of Sambalpur and stated that they were induced to come to Purī in consequence of one of their co-religionists having been commanded by their *guru*—an invisible being without shape or form—to bring the images of Jagannāth, Balarām and Subhadrā out of the temple and burn them on the road. In obedience to what they believed to be a divine command, a body of men and women left their homes in Sambalpur. When within a few miles of Purī, 12 men and 3 women separated themselves from the main body and preceded them to the temple. These 15 persons, who were almost in a state of nudity, came up to the temple, shouting "*Alekh*," "*Alekh*." Having forced their way into the building, they proceeded to break down the door of the *Bhogamandapa*, the building in which the offerings of the

Kumbhipatiās.

* R. V. Russell, *Central Provinces Census Report of 1901*, Part I, pp. 86, 87.

worshippers are usually displayed. They then made their way into the great hall of the temple in front of the shrine, but found the door called *Jay-bijay* shut. On this, they went out into the enclosure and rushed about like madmen, endeavouring to find an entrance in some other direction. In the struggle which took place, one of them fell or was pushed on to the stone pavement. He was lifted up by some of his companions and was assisted out of the temple, and shortly after expired.*

The rioters being inhabitants of Sambalpur, the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces was asked to furnish particulars of the sect and its tenets, and in compliance with this request gave the following information :—"There is a peculiar sect of Hindu dissenters in the Sambalpur district, known as Kumbhipatiās. The word Kumbhipatiā is derived from *kumbhi,* the name of a kind of tree,† and *pat*, the bark of a tree ; and the sect is so-called because its followers make ropes from the bark of the tree and wear them round their waists. The religion is also known as that of *Alekh*, and its followers claim revelation as its foundation. Alekhswāmi, the god incarnate, used, it is said, to reside in the Himālayas, but about the year 1864 he came to Malbaharpur in Bānki in the Cuttack district, and there revealed a new religion to 64 persons, the principal of whom was Gobind Dās ; and it was chiefly owing to the exertions of the disciples that the religion was propagated. Alekhswāmi (which signifies "the lord whose attributes cannot be described in writing") removed to Dhenkānāl, a Feudatory State, where for 3 years immediately preceding his death he led the life of a mendicant and wanderer. Although the religion originated in Cuttack, it spread more rapidly in the district of Sambalpur, and men of all classes and castes, except the Oriyā Brāhmans, are freely embracing it. It was not so much the peculiarity of the rules of any particular caste or sect that tended to increase the number of converts as the position in life of the converts themselves : for example, in Khindā the people of a whole village embraced the Kumbhipatiā religion because the *gaontiā* had done so. The names of some 30 villages are given as those in which the Kumbhipatiās chiefly reside."

Further details are given in the *Central Provinces Census Report of 1881*, where the following account of the Kumbhipatiās is quoted from the Census Report of Sambalpur : —"Their religion,

* C. E. Buckland, *Bengal under the Lieutenant-Governors* (1901), Vol. II, pp. 733-735.

† *Kumbhi* is the Hindī name for the yellow cotton tree (*Cochlospermum Gossypium*).

also known as *Alekh*, appears to have originated in Angul and the Dhenkānāl Feudatory State about the year 1866. The name of the founder of the religion appears unknown, and its followers state that he is a spiritual being without form, who lives in heaven. His chief disciple, Gobind Dās, is dead; another known as Narsingh Dās has erected his *math* (temple) in Bânki. The Kumbhipatiās have another temple in Malbahar in Bānki. They have a book called *mālikā*, which contains predictions. They are divided into three sects, the Kumbhipatiā Gosāins, the Kānapathiā Gosâins, and Ashritas. The two former sects have renounced the world; the followers of the one do not eat with those of the other. They appear to be of dirty habits, not washing after easing themselves, and not bathing at all. The third sect, called Ashrita, do not renounce the world, nor deem celibacy essential, nor are they turned out of caste. They look up to the other two sects as their *gurus* or spiritual guides, and follow their religion. They bathe in the early morning, and all three sects turn their faces towards the sun, at time of rising and setting, and prostrate themselves five or seven times. They do not eat after sunset. Each sect has a separate temple or place of prayer. They recognize *Bhāgabat*, one of the Hindu religious books, but interpret it differently to the Hindus. They do not respect the images of the Hindu gods, arguing that as no one has ever seen the Supreme Being, it is impossible to form his image. They believe in the existence of thirty-three crores of Hindu gods and goddesses, but do not obey them, asserting that it is not necessary to obey the servant but only the master. Their worship consists of prayer and praise to the immaterial Being, whom they call *Alekh*."

Bābu Bijay Chandra Mazumdār of Sambalpur has kindly furnished further information regarding the sect, which conflicts in some respects with that given above. He states that the leader under whose instructions the Kumbhipatiās sought to destroy the idol of Jagannāth was one Bhīm Bhoi, a blind and illiterate man, possessed however of considerable mental power. This Bhīm Bhoi had his seat at Khaliāpāli in the Sonpur Feudatory State; and Khaliāpāli is still the principal *Guru Duār*, or hierarch's seat of the Kumbhipatiās. Bhīm Bhoi gave new life to the Kumbhipatiā doctrine and made the cult popular throughout Sambalpur. Some Brāhmans indeed openly embraced the religion by throwing away their Brahmanical threads. They worship no god; prayer is never offered; and the temples are merely *maths*. All the religious books of the Hindus, and not only the *Bhāgabat*, are interpreted in a fanciful manner, according to the *Alekh* doctrine.

Formerly no garment was used, and at times the bark of trees only covered their shame. The lay Kumbhipatiās observe the customary caste system, but the specially initiated do not. It is difficult to obtain much reliable information regarding the Kumbhipatiās owing to the fact that they do not disclose their secret doctrines to the uninitiated.

Animism. The proportion of Animists is higher than in any district in Bengal outside the Chotā Nāgpur plateau. The name Animism, which for want of a better nomenclature is used for an amorphous congeries of pre-Hindu religious ideas, includes a number of diverse cults; but briefly it may be described as "the belief which explains to primitive man the constant movements and changes in the world of things by the theory that every object which has activity enough to affect him in any way is animated by a life and will of his own."* Its leading features have been summed up as follows in the Census Report of India for 1901:—"It conceives of man as passing through life surrounded by a ghostly company of powers, elements, tendencies, mostly impersonal in their character, shapeless phantasms of which no image can be made and no definite idea can be formed. Some of these have departments or spheres of influence of their own: one presides over cholera, another over small-pox, another over cattle disease; some dwell in rocks, others haunt trees, others again are associated with rivers, whirlpools, waterfalls or with strange pools hidden in the depths of the hills. All of them require to be diligently propitiated by reason of the ills which proceed from them, and usually the land of the village provides the ways and means for this propitiation."†

The description which Captain Forsyth gives in the *Highlands of Central India* of the religion of the Gonds, who in this district constitute 8 per cent. of the population, may be taken as typical of the origin and nature of the animistic beliefs of the people. "The foundation of their creed appears to be a vague pantheism, in which all nature is looked upon as pervaded by spiritual powers, the most prominent and powerful of which are personified and propitiated by simple offerings. Every prominent mountain top is the residence of the Spirit of the Hill, who must be satisfied by an offering before a *dhya* can be cut on its slopes. The forest is peopled by woodland spirits, for whom a grove of typical trees is commonly left standing as a refuge in clearing away the jungle. When the field is sown, the god of rice fields (Khodo Pen) has to be satisfied, and again when the crop is

* W. Crooke, *Imperial Gazetteer of India* (1907), Vol I, p. 431.

† *Report of the Census of India, 1901*, Part I, p. 356.

reaped. The malignant powers receive regular propitiation. The tiger god has a hut built for him in the wilderness that he may not come near their dwellings. The goddess of small-pox and of cholera receives offerings chiefly when her ravages are threatened. Among such elementary powers must be reckoned the ghosts of the deceased, which have to be laid by certain ceremonies. These consist in conjuring the ghost into something tangible, in one case into the body of a fish caught in the nearest water, in another, into a fowl chosen by omen. The object, whatever it is, is then brought to the house of the deceased and propitiated for a certain time, after which it is formally consigned to rest by burial. The spirits of persons killed by wild animals are believed to be specially malignant, and are "laid" with much care and ceremony. None of these powers of nature are represented by idols, nor have they any particular forms or ceremonies of worship. They are merely localised by some vague symbol; the mountain god by a daub of vermilion on some prominent rock; the tree god by a pile of stones thrown round the stem of a tree, and so on. At these the simple savage pays his devotions, almost furtively, as he passes in the gray of the morning to his day's labour, by a simple prostration, or perhaps by the offering of a handful of rice or an onion. More elaborate acts of worship are engaged in by the community at certain seasons, and then these primitive powers may be joined with the more personal deities derived from their neighbours in the general act of worship.

"In the next stage the tribes have added certain fetishes to the list of powers The principal of these is an iron spear head called Phārsā Pen, and he is supported by the Bell god, the Chain god, a god composed of some copper money hung up in a pot, shapeless stones, and many other objects, the power attributed to which is purely arbitrary and unconnected with any natural agency. To this stage appears to belong the medicine man and dealer in witchcraft, who still possesses considerable power among the tribes. These medicine men can scarcely be called priests and are not an hereditary caste. Their business is to exorcise evil spirits, to interpret the wishes of the fetish, to compel rain, and so on. Some of them seem to have acquired the power of throwing themselves into a sort of trance, in which they are visited by the deity.

"In a still more advanced stage the Gonds have resorted to hero worship; but it is curious that all the deified heroes they reverence are of purely Hindu derivation. The chief are Bhīma, one of the five Pāndu brethren, who is represented by his mythical club either in stone or wood; Hardyāl, a Rājput hero

of much later date; Dulha Deo, the apotheosis of a bridegroom, and many others. Lastly come the divinities of the Hindu pantheon. Amongst a race whose blessings are few and hardships many, it is not surprising that the malevolent members of the Hindu pantheon should have found more acceptance than the benevolent deities. Vishnu is scarcely recognised by them, except in his one terrible development of Narsingha or the Man-Tiger; while Siva, the Destroyer, with his formidable consort Kālī and son Bhairava are the favourite objects of reverence among the more advanced of the tribes. These are represented by rude idols, Siva himself in his usual phallic form; and a Brāhman in many cases officiates at their shrines. Here for the first time we find mythology—the science of priests—at work. In their earlier stages the tribes had no priests, no hierarchy of gods, and consequently no mythology. Now legends are invented to connect the tribes and their earlier gods with the great web of Hindu fiction, and bring them within the dominion of caste and priestdom."

The census statistics show a considerable variation in the number of those returned as Animists, viz., 46,652 in 1881 and 26,353 in 1891 in the district as formerly constituted, and 38,935 in 1901 in the district as now constituted. It is noticeable that, in spite of the diminished area of the district, the number of Animists has greatly increased during the last decade; but probably not much reliance should be placed on the figures, the marked differences at each census being explained by the difficulties attending a correct differentiation between Hindus and Animists and by the personal equation of the census staff. Practically all the Animists are members of aboriginal races, such as Gond, Khond, Binjhāl, Kurā, Khariā, Kol, Savarā, etc.; but many of these have now been brought within the fold of Hinduism, profess the Hindu religion, frequent the Hindu temples, and take a pleasure in reading Hindu religious and mythological books. This is only natural, for the aborigines living in the plains are surrounded by a large Hindu community, and adopt their manners, customs and religion to ensure the sympathy of their neighbours.

Christians. Of the 714 Christians enumerated in 1901, altogether 567 were natives. The Baptist Mission has a station at Sambalpur, and maintains a school there; during the winter months the missionaries carry on evangelistic work among the lower castes and aboriginal tribes in the wilder parts of the district. The Lutheran Mission, with headquarters at Chakradharpur, also works in the district. It was reported in 1901 that the converts of the Baptist Mission numbered 308 and those of the Lutheran Mission 112.

TRIBES AND CASTES.

The population of Sambalpur has been recruited principally by immigration from Orissa, of which there appear to have been several different waves dating back several centuries. It is also composed to a certain extent of aboriginals, who have swept in from Chotā Nāgpur, and there has been some admixture of their blood with that of the Aryan immigrants.

Binjhāl	...	39,225
Bhuiyā	...	9,073
Gond	...	63,248
Kawar	...	3,835
Khond	...	15,026
Kisān	...	14,268
Kol	...	9,680
Kurdā	...	11,192
Savarā	...	76,841
Khariā	...	5,029

The aboriginal element is a large one, representing 33 per cent. of the population in 1901, and includes no less than 10 tribes numbering over 3,000 as shown in the margin.* The Oraons have not apparently been given a separate place in the returns, but must be numerous, for in 1901 24,664 persons were returned as speaking Oraon.* Some of these races, notably the Binjhāls and Gonds, have played an important part in the history of Sambalpur. In the internal struggles for the throne under Rānī Mohan Kumārī, the chief supporters of discontented pretenders were always Gond and Binjhāl zamīndārs, who found their privileges threatened and their lands encroached on by Hindu favourites of the Rānī. Later, the Gonds of Bargarh rose against the Rājā, Nārāyan Singh, led by a Gond zamīndār, who in 1821 had been ousted from his estate in favour of a Kultā; and from 1857 to 1864 many of the rebel chiefs were Gonds and Binjhāls, who feared further losses under the British settlement. The aboriginal element is still strong among the old families holding under feudal tenures, and of the 16 zamīndāri estates in the district, no less than twelve are held by Gonds and Binjhāls. A large number of the latter also are managers of villages; but, as a rule, they are not proprietors, but lessees holding under zamīndārs in the more backward tracts.

The majority of the aboriginals now cultivate small patches of land in the wilder parts of the zamīndāris, and are generally poor. Their holdings are, as a rule, insufficient to provide them with a full livelihood, and they eke out the cultivation of millets and sessamum by collecting forest produce. But with them poverty is a racial characteristic, and, as they will not work in times of hardship or save in times of plenty, their living cannot be otherwise than from hand to mouth. There seems little doubt that the power of the aboriginal owners of the soil is gradually being broken "The aggression of the Hindu," writes Mr. Dewar, "is continuous and successful. The aboriginal, bought, mortgaged, and sometimes cheated, out of the land created by his forefathers,

* The figures are those for the district as constituted at the census of 1901. Revised figures for the district as now constituted are not available.

is exported to Assam or moves to the still uncleared forests." The Mundā tribes in the east of the district have usually resisted Hindu proselytism, and still speak their own dialects and worship their own gods; but others have become, at least nominally, Hindu in religion, and now speak only Oriyā and Hindī.

As regards the distribution of the principal aboriginal tribes, the Binjhāls and Khonds inhabit chiefly the south-west of the district, the Gonds are prominent in the Bargarh plain, and the Mundā tribes, such as Kols, Kurās, Kisāns and Khariās, are confined to the east of the Mahānadī. The Binjhāls and Khonds have fallen off largely in numbers, chiefly because their country was severely affected by the famine of 1900. The Mundā tribes, on the other hand, have hitherto held their own, and their numbers have greatly increased. They are hard-working and fairly thrifty, and though regular drinkers of rice beer, do not often become drunkards. Kols, Mundās and Oraons hold in small plots almost all the land in villages closely adjoining Sambalpur, and their families provide the day labour used by contractors on roads and buildings. The Kurās are the tank diggers of the district, and their labour is in constant demand. They engage on piece work only, and being industrious and expert, they get good wages. The projector of a tank usually secures the services of a party of these people, who camp beside their work throughout the spring and hot weather, returning to their own villages for the rainy season. The Gond, who has shown himself able to exist apart from his tribe, has also survived Hindu competition well. In most villages a Gond fills the post of *jhānkar* or principal watchman—an honourable post, for the *jhānkar* is a subordinate village priest, and one of his duties is to propitiate the local earth god and thereby ensure good harvests.

The marginal statement shows the strength of the tribes and castes numbering over 25,000 and their proportion to the total population. The figures given are those for the old district of Sambalpur, statistics for the district as now constituted not being available.

Caste.	Number.	Percentage of population.
Gāndā	104,661	13
Gaura	92,964	11
Kultā	87,689	11
Savarā	76,841	9
Gond	63,248	8
Binjhāl	39,225	5
Kewat	38,231	5
Teli	30,714	4
Brāhman	27,551	3

The following is a brief account of each of these tribes and castes.

The Gāndās* are an aboriginal race known in other parts of Orissa as Pāns; some also in this district call themselves Pāns, as well as Dambās and Paindās. They are a servile class of drudges, who weave coarse cloth and act as village watchmen, while in every village there are a few who are professional pipers and drummers, and are regularly employed as musicians at Hindu marriages. They are as a rule poor, for with their rough hand-looms and slow weaving they cannot compete with machine-made goods. Those who depend solely upon weaving for their livelihood can hardly earn enough for subsistence; they are not skilful cultivators; and it is difficult for them to find employment in other avocations on account of the caste prejudices of the Hindus; for the Gāndā is a helot whose touch defiles. It is probably owing, in part at least, to their poverty that they are professional thieves, responsible for a large proportion of the crime of the district. But their inherited character is not high, and their criminal propensities appear to be responsible for the fact that, by ancient custom, the subordinate village watchman is a Gāndā appointed on the principle of setting a thief to catch a thief, or with the idea that he will be a pledge for the good behaviour of other Gāndā thieves. Gāndās.

The Gāndās are regarded by Hindus as one of the very lowest castes. They are so degraded, that a twice-born Hindu considers it necessary to bathe if he is touched by one of them, and it is said that 50 years ago a Brāhman was defiled by a Gāndā casting his shadow over him. They are not allowed to draw water from the village tank, the village barber will not shave them, the village washerman will not wash their clothes. No orthodox Hindu rides a cart if a Gāndā happens to drive it, wears a garment if a Gāndā has stitched it, sits on a floor if a Gāndā has *liped* it, *i.e.*, plastered it with cow-dung, drinks wine if a Gāndā has distilled it, or purchases vegetables if a Gāndā sells them. A Gāndā in suffering receives no sympathy, and the door of Hindu charity is ordinarily closed against him. Until recently, moreover, no Gāndā child was allowed to join the village school, and though they are now allowed to attend it, they must sit apart from other Hindu boys. They cannot enter a Hindu temple, or take part in Hindu religious ceremonies, and they are not allowed to build their houses in the *ābādi* with other Hindus, or be employed as household servants in Hindu families.

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* This account of the Gāndās has been compiled from a monograph prepared for the ethnographic survey of the Central Provinces by Mulla Mian Bhai Abdul Husain, formerly Subdivisional Officer of Bargarh.

However, in towns and large places they find employment as labourers with non-Hindus or unorthodox Hindus.

There are four subdivisions of Gāndās known as Oriyā, Lariā, Kandhriā and Kabhriā. Three of these appear to be territorial subdivisions, for the Oriyā Gāndās are those who live in the Oriyā country and speak Oriyā, the Lariā those who reside in the Lariā country, *i.e.*, Chhattīsgarh, and speak Lariā or Chhattīsgarhī, and the Kandhriās are so called because they live in the Kandh (Khond) country. Kabhriās are Kabīrpanthis or followers of Kabīr, but they and the Kandhriās are sparingly represented in this district. The Oriyās and Lariās intermarry, and will drink, eat and smoke together, but not with the Kandhriās or Kabhriās. Unlike the Kabhriās, who do not eat meat or fish, the ordinary Gāndās eat beef, pork, fowls, fish, rats, and cloven-footed animals, but refrain from eating monkeys, crocodiles, snakes, lizards and the leavings of other people. There is a tendency for the Oriyā Gāndās to give up the practice of eating beef. They do not kill a cow openly, for, if they do so, they are excommunicated; but they may eat beef if a cow dies or has been killed. The Lariā Gāndās will neither butcher a cow openly nor eat its flesh, but the Kandhriās can do both. A certain number of Gāndās have become Christians, and non-Christian Gāndās will eat and intermarry with them. As a matter of fact, however, intercourse between the Christian and Hindu Gāndās is checked by the fact that the former regard themselves as having a higher status, and also because there is an idea among the latter that the Christian Gāndās are unholy because they do not observe *dina*, *i.e.*, the anniversary *srāddha*.

The Gāndās will admit into their castes outsiders belonging to higher castes, but no one belonging to the castes which they regard as lower than themselves, viz., Chamār, Ghāsiā, Hāri, Māngan and Mehtar. The Gāndā is, indeed, polluted by the touch of any of these latter and has to take a purifying bath; while if he is beaten by one of them or eats from the hands of one of them or of a Kāyasth, he is temporarily outcasted. The same penalty attaches to any one whose cow dies while tied up, or who works as a *sais*. In order to obtain readmission into the caste, he has to undergo a curious form of *prāyaschitta*. A Gāndā of the Chhurā *gotra* or barber class shaves the man, and some water with a little gold is put into an earthen pot; the offending Gāndā bathes himself with this water and gives a feast to the caste, all this being done under a *mahuā* tree. When a cow dies with a rope on its neck, there is an extra penalty, for the owner must go on pilgrimage either to Purī or to Narsinghnāth in the Borāsāmbar zamīndāri.

The religion of the Gāndās presents no special features. They worship all the Hindu gods and especially revere Mahālakshmī, because, it is said, they care more for money than for moral virtues. For practical purposes they are most interested in averting the evil eye and exorcising evil spirits. Their priests are men of their own caste, called Birtiās, who live in the Gāndāparā or Gāndā settlement, but try to assert that they are not Gāndās and marry among themselves.

Girls are married generally between the age of 5 and 12 years, and if a girl is unmarried when she attains puberty, she is married to a bow or an arrow tied to a post made of *mahuā* wood. The ordinary marriage ceremony presents some curious features. The bride walks seven times round the bridegroom, and at the end of each round presses two cakes against his cheeks, after which each cake is thrown away. After rice has been put on both their foreheads, they mount on the hips of two persons attending the marriage, if they are grown up, but if young, on their shoulders; and then their bearers dance. Divorce is allowed in case of incompatibility of temper, or if the wife is unfaithful, has been convicted of theft, or is barren. The divorce is symbolized by the woman breaking her glass bangles in the presence of her husband and his fellow castemen. Formerly there used to be a headman, called *sethiā*, who was practically the owner of divorced wives, selling them to others and pocketing the proceeds. The divorced wives remained with their parents or guardians, but the *sethiā's* consent to remarriage was necessary and fees were invariably paid to him.

The dead are generally buried, but rich Gāndās indulge in the luxury of cremation. The body is placed on its back with the head to the north and may not be exhumed, but the bones may be taken out of the grave to be thrown into the Ganges. The man who takes the bones is temporarily outcasted, but on his return he gives a feast and is then readmitted into the caste.

Pankās. The Pankās were originally a subcaste of Gāndās, but are now practically a separate caste. They are Gāndās who have adopted Kabīrpanthism, and have thereby obtained a slight rise in status. The legend of their origin is that on one occasion Sankarāchārya and his disciples were wandering in the forests of Sambalpur, when they came to the hut of a Gāndā. Being thirsty, Sankarāchārya asked the Gāndā for water and drank it. His disciples seeing that he had taken water from a Gāndā, without regard to his caste, also did so. Sankarāchārya said nothing, but proceeded on his way. Presently he came to the shop of a brazier who had some molten metal in a mould.

Sankarāchārya drank the burning metal and told his disciples to do the same. They said they could not, whereupon the master said to them—"I can take water from a Gāndā without pollution, but you cannot." After this his disciples were degraded to the Gāndā caste, and from them are descended the Pankās.

Gauras. The Gauras* or Gahras (also called Rāwats) are the herdsmen of the district, corresponding to the Goālās elsewhere. Their numerical strength may be accounted for by the fact that they were attracted, and induced to settle down, by the extensive grazing grounds which formerly existed. They are still chiefly graziers, or household servants, and account for a large proportion of the small cultivators. Except in the more jungly tracts, few hold villages, and, though many are well-do-to, most of them are ordinary cultivators with good stocks, small holdings and small debts. A number are farm servants or field labourers, and each village has a Gaura servant, known as the *nariha*, who is responsible for the village herd and for supplying water to officials and strangers halting at the village. Their connection with the cow and their duties as water-bearers give them a fair social position, but they are neither enterprising nor very industrious. As milkmen they are notorious for adulterating milk and have no reputation for honesty. Indeed a popular proverb is :—*Patarkatā, Tantarkatā, Paniotā, Gaurinī mai, E chari jati ku bisuās nai*, *i.e.*, Do not trust a palm-leaf writer (Mahānti), a weaver, a distiller or a Gaura woman.

There are several subdivisions of Gauras, some of which are territorial, such as Magadha, or those from the country of Magadha, and Jharuā, *i.e.*, those who used to live in the *jhar* or jungles. The Nandas are named after Krishna's adoptive father, who was a cowherd; and other subdivisions are Sola Khandia, Jachak, Abab and Kanda. The Magadha subdivision is the most numerous of all, absorbing almost three-fourths of the total number of Gauras. They have 120 *bargas* or exogamous divisions, most of which may have been originally totemistic, though totemistic practices seem to have disappeared. They allow widow marriage, which is effected by the husband giving new bangles to the widow, and a girl who has passed the age of puberty is married in the same manner. If a widow is married to a bachelor, the latter has first to be married to a flower. The Gauras worship Samlāi and Chandī Devī, and pay special reverence to the cow.

* This account of the Gauras has been prepared with the help of a note kindly contributed by Mr. Hīrā Lāl, Extra Assistant Commissioner and Assistant Superintendent of Gazetteer, Central Provinces.

The Kultās,* also called Koltās or Kolitās, are the chief cultivating caste of Sambalpur. They say that they immigrated from the Baud State, which they regard as their ancestral home, and that a member of their caste formerly held the position of Dīwān of the State. According to one of their legends, their ancestors were employed as water-bearers in the royal household of Rāma, and having accompanied him in his exile, were permitted to settle in the Oriyā country at the request of the Raghunāthiā Brāhmans, who wanted cultivators to till the soil. Another legend is that Rāma, when wandering in the forests of Sambalpur, met three brothers and asked them to draw water for him. The first brought water in a clean brass pot and was called Sudh (well-mannered). The second made a cup of leaves and drew water from a well with a rope; he was called Dumāl from *dori-māl*, a coil of rope. The third brought water only in a hollow gourd and was named Kultā from *ku-rīta*, ill-mannerred. This story serves to shew that the Kultās, Sudhs and Dumāls acknowledge some connection, and in the Sambalpur district they will take food together at festivals. Another similar legend is that when Rāma was wandering in the forests, he felt thirsty, and seeing a Kol carrying water in a gourd, asked him to give it to him. Being conscious of his low position, the Kol was reluctant to do so. Thereupon Rāma told the Kol to pour the water in a hole on a stone, and then drank it. It so happened that his wife Sītā threw away a half-eaten fruit, which turned into a girl; and this girl Rāma bestowed on the Kol as a mark of his gratitude for giving him the water. Their issue was therefore called Kolitha from Kol and *litha* (half-eaten). Kultās.

These legends would appear to indicate an aboriginal descent or an admixture of Aryan and non-Aryan blood. Another plausible theory of their origin is that they are an offshoot of the Chasā caste, the principal cultivating caste of Orissa; for several of their family names are identical with those of the Chasās, and there is a subcaste of the latter called Kultā Chasās. It has also been conjectured that the Kultās may be those Chasās who took to growing *kultha*, a favourite pulse in Sambalpur.

The caste worship the goddess Rāmchandī, who is regarded as the personification of Mother Earth, on whose bounty they live. She is represented by a handful of earth brought from her

* This account of the Kultās has been compiled mainly from an article prepared for the ethnographic survey of the Central Provinces (based on a paper contributed by Mr. Darmānand Tewāri, Extra Assistant Commissioner and Assistant Settlement Officer, Sambalpur) and from a note contributed by Mr. Hīrā Lāl, Extra Assistant Commissioner and Assistant Superintendent of Gazetteer, Central Provinces.

shrine at Sarsarā in the Baud State. They worship the plough in the month of Srāban, and a festival called Puājiuntia is observed in the month of Kunwār, at which barren women try to ascertain whether they will get a son. A hole is made in the ground and filled with water, and a fish is placed in it. The woman sits by the hole holding her cloth spread out, and if the fish in struggling jumps into her cloth, it is held to prognosticate the birth of a son. This ceremony, however, is said to be performed by other castes, and not peculiar to the Kultās. The Kultās employ Brāhmans for religious ceremonies and have Vaishnavas or Bairāgis as their *gurus*; no boy is married till he has a *guru*. Brāhmans will take water from Kultās, and their social status is equal to that of good agricultural castes.

Kultā girls must be married before puberty; otherwise the parents have to make an expiatory offering to the Brāhmans. If the parents are too poor to celebrate the marriage at the proper time, their fellow castemen raise a subscription for them. The Kultā marriages present several peculiar features. For instance, if the eldest boy or girl is married, the parents have to undergo a ceremony of re-marriage, which is called *sup-bibāha*. Possibly this is an expedient to ward off any insinuations as to the illegitimacy of their first child, or it may be a relic of a time when the couple began to live together informally, the ceremony being performed subsequently in order to legitimize their offspring. A figure is made with rice of a monkey or deer, at which the bridegroom shoots an arrow. It is then cooked and eaten. This may symbolize the chase and be a reminiscence of their former life in the jungle. Again, the drummers of the bride and bridegroom's party have a free fight, when the latter arrive at the former's village. If the bridegroom's party wins, all is well; but should they be defeated, the bride's father is fined. This may perhaps be a relic of marriage by capture. The Kultās allow widow marriage, but the widow price is high, the widow's suitor having to pay not less than Rs. 100. A bachelor, as a rule, does not marry a widow; but if he does, he has first to perform a mock marriage with a flower. This saves him from becoming a devil after his death.

The Kultās are good cultivators, strongly appreciate the advantage of irrigation, and show considerable public spirit, or, it may be canniness, in constructing tanks which will benefit the lands of their tenants as well as their own. The Kultā's boast is that, given water, he will grow good crops on even the poorest soil, but he will have nothing to do with land so flat as

to give no surface drainage. They are the best cultivators in the district, frugal and hard-working, and few of them are poor. They hold as *gaontiās* more villages than any other one caste in the district, and Kultā tenants are usually well-to-do, having large holdings, good stock, and ample savings. Many men of this class have so profited of late years by the rise in the price of rice as to be able to buy up villages from less thrifty and industrious aboriginals. Of late years too the richer Kultās have aped Brāhman customs, even to the extent of setting up for themselves a new caste rule forbidding them to touch the plough. As a class, their most prominent characteristics are frugality, industry, hunger for land, and readiness to resort to litigation rather than relinquish a supposed right to it. These characteristics may perhaps account for two uncomplimentary proverbs about them. The first is:—*Kuliya Kultā, nishthur Teli, Bāman sānge bāt na chāli*, *i.e.*, a Kultā is black at heart; a Teli is cruel; a Brāhman is a dangerous companion on a journey. The second is:—*Kultā ahankārī, Bāman bhikhārī*, *i.e.*, the Kultā is proud and the Brāhman a beggar.

The Savarās* are a caste of aboriginal descent, who have been identified with the Suari of Pliny and the Sabarai of Ptolemy. They occupy a degraded position among the servile castes, and, like the Pāns and other very low castes, are excluded from the Jagannāth temple at Purī. They themselves say that they were originally a wandering tribe roaming through the hills of Orissa and living on the products of the forest, but in Sambalpur they now live principally in the open country and have adopted Hindu usages. They are subdivided into two sub-castes called Oriyā and Lariā, *i.e.*, residents of Orissa and the Lariā (Chhattīsgarh) country. The Savarās claim also a third subdivision known as Kalāpithiā, *i.e.*, "black-backs," chiefly found in Purī, where they pull Jagannāth's car at the great car festival. The Kalāpithiās abstain from eating fowls and other food considered impure by orthodox Hindus, and are regarded as the highest class of Savarās. Savarās.

There are also two curious divisions which appear to have been formed without reference to social intercourse or marriage. They are Joriā and Khuntiā, and the distinction between them is that the former bury or burn their dead near a *jor* or small stream, while the latter do so near a *khunt*, *i.e.*, an old tree on high ground. These subdivisions intermarry and eat together, and

* This caste was returned as Savarās in the Central Provinces Census of 1901, but it is reported that they are known locally as Sabarās. In Bengal the Savarās and Sabarās were treated as separate castes at the census of 1901.

differ only in having some peculiar practices characteristic of each. For instance, the Joriās consider it a great sin to marry a girl after she has attained puberty, while the Khuntiās see nothing wrong in exceeding the age of puberty. The Joriās have therefore adopted the custom of marrying a girl to an arrow, if she cannot be disposed of before she attains maturity. If through some mischance she has attained maturity before being married to an arrow, she is tied to a tree in a jungle, which is a summary process of marrying her to that tree. She is finally given away as a widow to any member of the caste who will take her. Sometimes, however, such a girl is married, as an alternative, to an old man, and is then disposed of as a widow, the old man's claim to her as his wife not being recognized.

The chief deity of the Savarās is Mahālakshmī. They do not employ Brāhmans for religious or ceremonial purposes, but every one of them is said to have a Vaishnava or Bairāgi as a *guru*. They are chiefly agriculturists and field labourers. Perhaps half of them have small holdings of their own, and the others are labourers, many of whom are allowed by their masters to cultivate small plots in lieu of part of their wages. They are bad cultivators, and in the zamīndāris, where some of them eke out their livelihood by collecting jungle products, they continue to follow the primitive form of cultivation called *dahi*. They are described as being stupid, honest and hard-working, and as making the best of the farm-hands. The women, less stupid and even more hard-working, do most of the rice-husking and of the huckstering at the village markets. In most villages one of them is the *jhānkar* or priest of the village deity, a post for which the Savarā is believed to have special qualifications. He is considered the best of sorcerers, and is therefore regarded as a dangerous person. These gifts find expression in two popular proverbs:—(1) *Savarā ki puje, Rāwat ki bāndhi*, *i.e.*, Who can escape if a Savarā bewitches? What cattle can run away if a Rāwat ties it up? (2) *Savarā bis gobrā*, *i.e.*, The Savarā is verily a cup of poison.*

Gonds.

The Gonds† are a branch of the well known tribe in the Central Provinces. In this district the Gond families are old ones, and their numbers seem to indicate that previous to the Oriyā immigration, they held possession of the country, subduing

* This account of the Savarās has been compiled mainly from a note contributed by Mr. Hīrā Lāl, Extra Assistant Commissioner and Assistant Superintendent of Gazetteer, Central Provinces.

† This account of the Gonds has been compiled mainly from an article on the tribe prepared for the revised edition of the Imperial Gazetteer.

the Mundā tribes, who were probably there before them. They are of small stature and dark in colour. Their bodies are well proportioned, but their features are ugly, with a round head, distended nostrils, a wide mouth and thick lips, straight black hair and scanty beard and moustache. Their long hair is fastened in a knot behind, and is generally the only covering to the head. They are fond of hunting and pursue game with the eagerness and ardour of people of the forest. When employed in the chase they hang their arrows by the barb to their hair, with the point upwards and the feathered hilts hanging between their shoulders. When game is found, the bow is raised till the arrow points high into the air, and is then brought down to bear on its object, with an unerring aim at short distances. The Gonds are now, however, principally engaged in agriculture, and the bulk of them are farm servants and field labourers, but they include some of the leading zamīndārs and many of the *gaontiās*. They work well, but are improvident and lazy when they have got enough for their immediate wants. This trait has given rise to a proverb —"A Gond considers himself a king, if he has a pot of grain in his house."

There are two main divisions, the Rāj Gonds, who form the aristocracy, and the Dhur or dust Gonds, who are the plebeians. The Rāj Gonds may be taken to be the descendants of Gond landed proprietors, who have been formed into a separate subdivision and admitted to Hinduism with the status of a cultivating caste, Brāhmans taking water from them. Many Rāj Gonds wear the sacred thread and outdo Brāhmans in their purificatory observances, even having the wood which is to cook their food washed before it is burnt. But many of them are obliged once in four or five years to visit their god Bura Deo, and to place cow's flesh to their lips wrapped in a cloth, lest evil should befall their house. The religion of the Gond is simply animistic. The deified ancestors are represented by small pebbles kept in a basket in the holiest part of the house, *i.e.*, the kitchen, where he regularly worships them at appointed intervals. His greatest god is Bura Deo, but his pantheon includes many others, some being Hindu gods and other animals or implements to which Hindu names have been attached.

The funeral ceremonies of the Gonds are interesting. The corpses are usually buried with their feet to the south; but the higher classes burn their dead. On the fifth day after death they perform the ceremony of bringing back the soul. The relations go to the river side and call aloud the name of the dead person. They then enter the river, catch a fish or an insect

and taking it home, place it among the sainted dead of the family, believing that the spirit of the dead person has in this manner been brought back to the house. In some cases it is eaten, in the belief that it will thus be born again as a child. The good souls are quickly appeased, and their veneration is confined to their descendants. But the bad ones excite a wilder interest because their evil influences may be extended to others. A similar fear attaches to the spirits of persons who have died a violent or unnatural death.

Binjhāls. The Binjhāls* or Binjhwārs are a race of aboriginal descent, who appear to have been among the earliest inhabitants of the district. Their traditions associate them with the Vindhya hills, and their former home is believed to have been Ratanpur in Chhattīsgarh, whence they moved eastward in the direction of Borāsāmbar. A trace of their former domination is to be found in the legend of the origin of the Mahārājās of Pātnā given in the previous chāpter, and in the fact that the Binjhāl zamindār of Borāsāmbar still affixes the *tikā* to the Mahārājā of Pātnā on his accession. The more advanced Binjhāls, especially the landowners, boast of an alliance with Rājputs, and call themselves Barhiās, a title originally borne by small hill chiefs; but the simpler and more ignorant Binjhāls do not claim an Aryan descent.

The great majority are cultivators, and the rest are generally farm servants or field labourers. They are not such good cultivators as the Kultās and Aghariās, but are not inferior to the Gonds, and are advanced as compared with other Dravidian races. Those who have settled in the plains have taken to improved methods of rice cultivation; and in the hills and jungle tracts they have the reputation of being skilful *dahi* cultivators, *i.e.*, reclaimers of jungle, and of being the hardiest of the forest races. Here they are often proprietors or managers of villages, and the majority are independent cultivators; but in the plains they are mostly farm servants, field labourers, graziers or *jhānkars*. The *jhānkars* act as assistants of the village watchmen and as priests of the village deity. The latter is represented by a stone or tree and is worshipped on festival days by the *jhānkar*, who gets a large share of the offerings, such as goats, fowls, fruit, etc. Their oldest traditions represent them as a race of archers, and in the jungle tracts they still retain their skill with the bow. They have few scruples about

* This account of the Binjhāls has been compiled from a monograph prepared for the ethnographic survey of the Central Provinces by Mulla Mian Bhai Abdul Husain, formerly Subdivisional Officer of Bargarh.

food, eating pork, fowls, fish, tortoise, snakes, rats and leopards, but they do not eat monkeys, beef, crocodiles, lizards and jackals. The staple food of the poor consists of roots and the flowers of the *mahuā* tree, and they eat rice only on special occasions and on festivals. Cultivators, however, eat rice in the form of *pakhāl*. They are very fond of smoking, but will never use the *hukkā*, but only the *kāhāli*, *i.e.*, a cheroot made of country tobacco enclosed in leaves, one of which may generally be seen in the ear or waist of every male Binjhāl.

The Binjhāls worship all the Hindu deities, but traces of a more primitive belief may be seen in their worship of arrows, swords and spears. The following appear to be purely Binjhāl deities. Bindubāshinī is an idol in the shape of a girl carved in stone, which is enshrined in a temple on the hill near Narsinghnāth. It is said that twelve Binjhāl archers, who first settled in Borāsāmbar, brought this image from Bindhyāchal, *i.e.*, the Vindhya hills. There is a Binjhāl priest, and Binjhāls from adjacent villages visit the temple throughout the year, and offer goats, fowls, coconuts, etc. Once every three years, in the month of Phālgun, the worshippers take out the idol, and with great pomp carry it in procession round the principal Binjhāl villages, all the Binjhāl men and women, boys and girls escorting it from one village to another, dancing, singing and playing music on the way. They also present offerings to it in each village. Lakshmeswarī, the goddess of archery, is enshrined in a thatched temple in *mauzā* Khairā in the Borāsāmbar zamīndāri. Here six or seven three-headed spears of different size are placed, and these are worshipped by a Binjhāl, to whom the rent of 3 villages is assigned for the purpose. Dunger Devatā is the mountain deity, and is worshipped by every Binjhāl, without exception, on Dasaharā and Chaitpuni days. This deity is represented simply by a big stone placed anywhere over a hillock or on high ground under a tree.

The Binjhāls do not employ Brāhmans in any ceremony, but almost every Binjhāl takes *karna-mantras*, i.e., *mantras* whispered in the ear (*karna*), from a Bairāgi or Vaishnava, *e.g.*, *mantras* to be repeated in the morning at sun-rise, at the time of washing the teeth, at the time of making water, and at the time of easing. They believe firmly in ghosts or rather the spirits of the dead, for the soul of any wicked person may after death become a malevolent spirit. Their superstitious dread of spirits is phenomenal, and when any disease becomes chronic or any person is childless, they attribute it to the evil influence of one of them. On such occasions they call in a Binjhāl *guniā* or

exorcist to drive it out of the possessed person. In character, the Binjhāls of the hills are described as being straightforward and truthful, but their ideas of sin are very limited, the chief commandments of their moral code being—(*a*) Thou shalt not commit adultery with any one outside the caste, (*b*) thou shalt not steal, (*c*) thou shalt not give false evidence, (*d*) thou shalt not kill a human being, and (*e*) thou shalt not eat beef.

They constitute a strictly conservative caste, not admitting outsiders under any circumstances, and being extremely strict regarding any *liaison* between Binjhāl women and men of higher castes. They will not take food even from the highest Brāhman, and this caste scruple was a great difficulty in the administration of relief in the famine of 1900, being removed only by engaging Binjhāl cooks.

Generally speaking, marriage takes place when the girl attains maturity, or even two or three years after menstruation commences. The marriageable age for girls varies from 16 to 20, and for the boys from 18 to 22 years. Special facilities are given to young girls on festival days to mix with the other sex, and they are allowed to make their own selection; it is seldom that a girl of marriageable age remains unbetrothed or unmarried. Child marriage was originally unknown, and is still so amongst Binjhāls in the remote hilly tracts, but has been adopted in imitation of high caste Hindus by a few families of *gaontiās*, Barhiās and land-owners. The latter have also resorted to the custom of marrying to arrows those girls for whom husbands cannot be found. In case the first wife is without children, a second wife is taken without hesitation, even by a common Binjhāl of ordinary means, while if the husband is a man of some means, and his first wife is unable to carry on household business unaided, a second, third or even fourth wife is taken. A zamīndār marries a new wife (called a *pātrānī*) on the day he gets his powers over the zamīndāri, simply to commemorate the occasion, although he may have half a dozen wives already.

The marriage day is fixed by a curious method of divination. The bridegroom's father calls for the *gaint* or astrologer of the village, an elderly Binjhāl, on any auspicious day of the week except Saturday and Tuesday. At sunrise the astrologer places a bronze plate full of water in front of the bridegroom's house, and in this he puts two grains of rice and *urad*. If they sink, the sign is inauspicious, but this is avoided by selecting old light grains. Then a few grains of rice and *urad* are separately dropped into the water, and these are supposed to represent the boy and girl. If the grains come together, it is auspicious; if

they separate, it forebodes evil. The experiment is repeated thrice, and if the grains unite as many times, it means that the married life will be happy. If inauspicious signs appear, the betrothal ceremony is often postponed.

Widow marriage and divorce are allowed, and both the widows and divorced wives are as free to marry again as if they were maidens. A widow is expected to marry the younger brother of the deceased husband, the elder brother being regarded in the light of a father-in-law. She is not compelled to marry the younger brother, but she is often induced to do so, if the deceased has left any real property and no male issue; for a son by such a second marriage succeeds to the property left by the first husband. If, however, she does not consent, she is at liberty to marry some other person.

The dead are usually buried, but persons of advanced age and rich persons are generally burnt. The body is anointed with *haldi* (turmeric) and washed; new clothes are put on it, and then it is buried in a grave which is not less than three feet deep. Before burial, it is taken round the grave seven times. It is placed with the head towards the north, females being laid on the back with their face towards the sky, and males with the face downwards. If the body is burnt, the ashes and bones are generally taken to Pānch Pandāh Dhār in the stream near Narsinghnāth, and in some cases by rich land-owners to the Ganges. On the night of the ninth day after burial, the castemen go to the house of the deceased, cook food for the family, and take some of the mourners outside the village, where they clear a piece of ground under a tree. In the centre of this they put uncooked rice, with a lamp over it and cooked rice on either side. Then they watch for an insect or fly to come up to the lamp. The insect is carefully captured on a cake of uncooked flour, brought to the house of the deceased, and kept there till next morning. Next day the son of the deceased or, in default of a son, the nearest agnate relative shaves his moustaches, and the other mourners get themselves shaved. The insect is now taken to a stream, where they worship it, putting some grains of rice over it. They then throw it in the stream or thrust it inside the sand by a tuft of grass, and having done so, bathe and return to the deceased's house and feast there. This ceremony, which is known as *kharpāni*, is not performed for children under two years of age.

The Kewats are boatmen and fishermen. They do not, as a rule, fish in tanks, but only in the rivers and chiefly in the Mahānadī. They supply the town of Sambalpur and the riverside villages with fish, and also work all the ferries, the most Kewats.

important of which is the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway ferry at Sambalpur. Some of this caste hold river-side villages, but they are not the best of cultivators, and now that the railway has cut out the river as a trade route, the Kewats are losing their land. Kewat women often do business as confectioners of a kind, preparing the fried or popped rice which is used as a subsidiary meal. It is bought and eaten by men on a journey who have no time to cook food, and it is regularly given to children as an extra morning meal in the hot weather to prevent them courting some ailment by drinking water on an empty stomach.

Telis. The Telis are the oilmen of the country, but a great number have now taken to cultivation. Many Telis still are oil-pressers, who buy up sesamum and combine their caste trade with rice cultivation. The Haldiā Telis, who formerly worked in turmeric, have less to do with their original trade. Both classes are usually prosperous, and many hold rich villages.

Brāhmans. Numerically the Brāhmans* form a small part of the population, but their education, social status and wealth combine with the strong religious sentiment of the district to give them importance. They are the most numerous village proprietors, next to Gonds, Binjhāls and Rājputs, who being zamīndārs happen to hold a larger number of villages; and they are also substantial *mālguzārs*. They are subdivided into Utkal or Oriyā; Jharuā or Aranyak; Raghunāthiā, Bhīmgiriā or Pānch Sāsani; Haluā, Aluā, Sāruā and Susāri. The Utkals, who are mostly concentrated in the town of Sambalpur, are believed to be immigrants from Utkal or Orissa and are considered the purest. The Jharuās or Aranyaks, both of which terms mean men of the forest, claim to be earlier immigrants from Orissa, and account for their name by the fact that they were the first to clear the forests in Sambalpur and settle there. The Utkals look upon them as pseudo-Brāhmans created from men of the jungle (*jhar*), who became cooks and were adopted as sons by Rājās. Now there is a separate subdivision, apparently an offshoot of Jharuās, called Susāri, a term meaning a cook or superintendent of stores and provisions. The Raghunāthiās, who are among the lowest of the Brāhmans, are more avowedly converts from local tribes, who claim to have been raised to the status of Brāhmans by Raghunāth or Rāmchandra during his wanderings in the Dandakāranya forest. The Raghunāthiās are also called Bhīmgiriās or Pānch Sāsanis, and their explanation of these names is that Rājā Raghunāth

* This account of the Brāhmans of Sambalpur has been prepared from a note contributed by Mr. Hīrā Lāl, Extra Assistant Commissioner and Assistant Superintendent of Gazetteer, Central Provinces.

Deva of Hindol bestowed on their ancestors a *sâsan*, or royal grant, of five villages close to the Bhīmgiri mountain in the neighbourhood of Ganjām. The Aluās and Sāruās are occupational subdivisions, the former having taken to growing and selling *ālu* or potatoes and the latter *sāru* or arums. These two subdivisions intermarry, and are looked upon as inferior Brāhmans. They are chiefly met with in the Barpāli zamīndāri, where also Haluās are found in comparatively large numbers. The Haluās derive their name from the plough (*hal*), which, unlike other Brāhmans, they will handle and use.

The Oriyā Brāhmans have eponymous *gotras*, but it is a remarkable fact that there are traces of a survival of totemistic beliefs so common among Dravidian and semi-Dravidian groups. Thus the Brāhmans of the Bharadwāja *gotra* worship a bird of that name, elsewhere known as *nīl-kanth* or blue jay; those of the Kanduha *gotra* claim descent from a tortoise (*kachchhap*) and not Kashyap Rishi; those of the Parāsara *gotra* revere a *pārā* or pigeon. It is difficult to account for these superstitions, but they may be a survival of ancient totemism; they may be due to the adoption by the immigrant Brāhmans of Dravidian beliefs and observances; or they may show that, if the Brāhmans were not originally Dravidians, they had an infusion of Dravidian blood—a theory which is supported by the reasons assigned for the formation of the various endogamous groups.

The two most numerous subdivisions are the Jharuā and Utkal. Members of the former are looked down upon by the Utkal Brāhmans, who, being later immigrants, adhere more closely to Brahmanical rules; and there is no love lost between the two classes. The Utkals are less numerous than the Jharuās, but under native rule many of their families obtained great influence and acquired considerable grants of land. They have multiplied considerably and have subdivided their holdings without adding to them. Many have now no land and live on charity or by temple service. The pioneer Jharuās, on the other hand, are again rising in influence. They are careful cultivators, add to their estates, and, moving with the times, have engaged in mercantile pursuits and money-lending. A third class, called Lariā Brāhmans, are still later immigrants, who have come from Chhattīsgarh and settled in the north of the district. Their numbers are small, but they hold several good villages and are usually enterprising and prosperous.

The Brāhmans of this district are generally well-to-do cultivators, and several of them are substantial *mālguzārs*. They also follow their traditional occupation of priests, officiating at

various Hindu ceremonies; and several of them are Government servants, but very few go out of the district to serve in that capacity. The Land Records staff of the district and the ministerial staff of the offices are almost entirely manned by members of the less wealthy Brāhman families. As a class, the Brāhmans usually make good village managers, and as tenants form a prosperous section of the community. But when a Brāhman cultivator is poor, he is very poor; for he is much handicapped by his caste, and more especially by the rule which forbids him to touch a plough and forces him to employ paid labour.

SOCIAL LIFE.

The village community.

A typical Sambalpur village, picturesquely screened by palm, mango and fig trees, and surrounded by tanks of deep water, has an air of comfort about it which is rarely met with in the adjoining country. The houses have small vegetable gardens attached to them, and they are encircled by a wide expanse of rice fields under close tillage. Near the village will be found a spacious mango grove, in the shade of which a bazar may be held; and here and there throughout the cultivated area are tanks used for irrigation, from the banks of which there rise clumps of palm trees. On the skirts of the village or in well-irrigated patches of land further afield are plots of sugarcane, in which some work is always in progress—channels cut, new ground taken in, new wells dug, levels made more accurate, etc. Close by is the *bāndh*, a reservoir from which the village obtains its drinking water, and this is invariably consecrated or married to a god.

In the village itself the eye is struck by the neatness of the houses in small compounds enclosed by bamboo fences. They have mud walls and verandahs, are generally thatched with straw, and are approached by flights of steps leading from the lanes. Each village has a strangers' rest-house or *derāghar* erected and maintained by the villagers, which serves as a rest-house for postmen, policemen and travellers, as a place of detention for offenders till the police are called, as the headquarters of the *chaukīdār* by night, and as a common meeting-place by day. Another centre for the village gossips is the *pattābādi*, generally a platform below a tree, where the people meet in the afternoon or evening. Here they talk for an hour or two before they go to their fields in the afternoon, and here again they meet in the evening to discuss the village affairs. The principal temples are sacred to Mahādeva or Jagannāth, and in the centre of the tank containing the village drinking water will be seen a small column with a pigeon-hole or two, which is sacred to the village deity. In some unused lane may be espied the Jagannāth

car, which is kept there from one *Rath Jātrā* till another, when it is overhauled by the carpenter and decorated by the pious peasants. Most villages too contain a *bhāgabatgadi*, a small open shed in which the *bhāgabat* is recited. This is invariably done during epidemics of cholera and smallpox, when the villagers assemble in three or four parties, light fires, and sing the *bhāgabat* round them.

A few isolated houses at some distance from the village mark the Gāndāparā or settlement of the unclean Gāndās. The Gāndā is ordinarily a weaver, but ekes out his living by petty thefts. Dead cattle are his perquisite, and he is also the village humourist and musician in great demand at marriages and dances. Special measures have to be taken to prevent the Gāndās making thieving expeditions. Until recently it was the practice to sound a drum at night and take their roll-call, so as to make sure that they were not out on such raids. They are, in fact, a thief caste, and this is most probably the reason why there are in each village two watchmen, one a man of higher caste, who performs many of the *kotwār's* duties, and the other a Gāndā *chāukīdār*, who is by way of being a pledge for the good behaviour of his fellow Gāndās.

In most villages there is a considerable aboriginal element, including the stolid Gond, the merry Kol and the light-hearted, light-fingered Gāndā ; but Oriyās predominate. A distinguishing trait in the personal appearance of the Oriyās is the shiny look of the skin due to the use of oil, which is supposed to be a preventive against malaria. The women rub themselves with powdered turmeric, which gives the skin a lighter colour. The Oriyās are a cleanly people, bathing at least once every day and three or four times daily in the hot weather. When they bathe, they do so clothes and all, and return home with their dripping garments clinging to their bodies ; the idea being that it is improper to put on a new cloth until they have bathed. They also believe that to eat before immersion in water renders them impure, and consequently the first bath is taken before the morning meal. Most of them shave the fore-part of the head up to the crown, but not the back of the head. Their clothes are scanty, the well-to-do wearing a *dhotī* and *chādar*, while the poorer classes are content with a *dhotī* only. The food of the former consist of rice, fish, vegetables and various pulses, but lately wheaten cakes have been added.

The ordinary Oriyā cultivator subsists on *bāsi* or *pakhāl*, a fluid mixture of boiled rice and water; the rice is pounded by hand so that it may dissolve in water, and the mixture is left

standing during the night and drunk cold in the morning. In the hot weather they drink water in which rice has been boiled, and not plain water. They will not drink well water, as it is considered useless for *pakhāl*; and though many wells have been dug for their benefit, they are as a rule not used for drinking purposes. Shoes are rarely worn, both because the soil is so sandy as to render their use unnecessary, and also because shoes are tabooed in the rice fields. Nearly every man carries a cheroot of tobacco rolled in a *sāl* leaf, which is tucked under his *dhotī* at his waist or at the back of his ear. One or two are certain to have a straw plait smouldering gently; and great is their delight if a visitor gives them a box of matches.

The acknowledged leader of the village community is the *gaontiā* or headman, who is generally a Kultā or Utkal Brāhman. He is proprietor only of his home-farm, but as this usually comprises the best land in the village and is held free of revenue in return for his services, the *gaontiā* is, in wealth and status, nearly the equal of a full village proprietor. The executive council is the *panch* consisting of some of the leading tenants, who attend to details of village management, such as the distribution of water from tanks. Their decisions command respect, and there are rarely any complaints of selfishness on their part.

The usual village servants are the *negi* or village accountant, *kumhār* or potter, *lohār* or blacksmith, *narihā* or herdsman and water-carrier, *bhandāri* or barber, and *dhobā* or washerman. They generally have service holdings, with the exception of the *negis*, the number of whose holdings is now small. The *negi*, it may be explained, was formerly a kind of general assistant to the *gaontiā*, but his place in the village has been taken by the *patwāri* since the Land Record staff was organized. The others are to be found in most of the larger and older villages. By ancient custom the *narihā* is the water-carrier who serves the camps of Government officers, while the *kumhār* provides pots for strangers, and receives as a perquisite any straw used in the camps of officials.

Jhānkar. A noticeable feature of rural life in Sambalpur is that the *jhānkar* or village priest is a universal and recognized village servant of fairly high status. It is his office to sacrifice a fowl or goat, in case of illness or disaster, to the malignant deity which haunts the *bāndh*, lonely hill or wide-spreading tree. Under some such tree will be seen a small trident painted red, and probably close by a heap of past offerings now broken up and decayed. This is the shrine of the *jhānkar*, whose ancestors have from time immemorial been entrusted with the duty of keeping the village deity from molesting the village. Should the

depredations of a tiger call an officer to the village, the *jhānkar* will be found hovering near waiting to be interviewed; he must be told to do *pūjā* to the deity and promised a goat if the tiger is killed. When this has been done, the people will beat with pleasure, and a good beat is thus secured for the price of a goat.

The *jhānkar* is nearly always a member of one of the aboriginal tribes, and his business is to conduct the worship of the local deities of the soil, crops, forests and hills. He generally has a substantial holding, rent-free, containing some of the best land in the village. He gets a basket of grain from each tenant after threshing is over, and the heads of all the goats sacrificed to the village deity. It is said locally that the *jhānkar* is looked on as the descendant of the founder of the village, and as the representative of its old owners, who were ousted by the Hindus. He worships on their behalf the indigenous deities, with whom he naturally possesses a more intimate acquaintance than later immigrants. The gods of the latter cannot be relied on to exercise a sufficient control over the works of nature in the foreign land to which they have been imported, or to ensure that the earth will regularly bring forth its fruit in season.

Free labour.

Another peculiar feature of village life in Sambalpur is the institution of free labour, which is described by Mr. Dewar as follows. "The continued existence of the institution of free labour is due to the fact that profitable rice cultivation on a large scale is impossible, unless the grower can at the critical seasons of seed-time and harvest command a large supply of labour. One day's delay in sowing, due to lack of hands, may result in a week's delay, owing to unsuitable weather conditions, and that in turn may delay later operations and result in a partial or total loss of the crop if, as frequently happens, the later rain fails. For a large farm, such as is necessary to the status of a *gaontiā*, many regular farm servants are kept, who, in the seven months of the year when rice is not in the ground, do the preparatory ploughing and manuring, and work in the cane-field. But to keep on yearly hire a sufficient number of men to sow promptly all the rice land would be to lose a very large part of the present profits, because most of these men would have to be paid a year's wages for a month's work. On the other hand, there are in the Sambalpur villages very few labourers who do not themselves hold land, and those who do cannot be tempted by high wages at the sowing season. At the last census the great majority of agricultural day-labourers were found to be women, and these cannot work the plough. The result of this *impasse* is the custom by which each ryot in a village provides a ploughman

and a yoke of oxen for two days at sowing time and a sickleman for two days at harvest time to help the *gaontiā* with his farm. It has been the official habit to consider this custom objectionable. But it is in fact free labour, not forced labour, and corresponds with friendly customs which to this day are in vogue among farmers in England and Scotland."

Amusements and festivals.

Dances are a favourite amusement, and one may frequently witness at night a *nāch* by the village party, the Rām Līlā or Krishna Līlā *nāch* being a great favourite. The orchestra as often as not includes the *gaontiā* himself, who organizes the whole entertainment. Wherever Kols are found, the village is enlivened by their quaint but intricate circular dances, men and women arm in arm keeping good time throughout. Numerous festivals are observed in the year, of which a few may be mentioned here.

Before sowing commences, on *Akshaya tritīyā*, every tenant takes a little paddy-seed and milk, a new thong and rope, a new plough (if he can afford it), and puts on a new cloth. Then he yokes his oxen, puts three handfuls of rice in front of the yoke of the plough, and sprinkles some milk and vermilion. He gives a handful of the seed to each bullock, and facing east throws seven handfuls broadcast. Then he ploughs his land and returns home; on this day he eats no vegetables or turmeric. After the ceremony is performed, sowing may go on without interruption.

Before transplantation, a ceremony called *Kādo varishta* takes place on Srāban Amāwasyā, *i.e.*, the 15th day of the dark half of the month of Srāban (July-August). On this occasion a goat, or it may be two goats, purchased by the subscriptions of the villagers is offered to the village deity. Before it is killed, the goat is washed, and the *jhānkar* collects from every ryot a little rice and a little paddy or *lei*, *i.e.*, a mixture of flour or ground rice with water or milk. These humble offerings he takes to the shrine, where he makes three little heaps of them. The goat is then brought up, in order that it may eat some of the rice. If it refuses to do so, it is not slaughtered; but if it does, it is killed, and some of its blood is sprinkled on the rice. Until this ceremony has been performed, the villagers cannot transplant rice after taking their midday meal; if a man wants to do so, he must not eat in the middle of the day.

On Srāban Pūrnimā, *i.e.*, the full moon day of Srāban, each man ties a *rākhi* (or band) round some rice stalks, and round the horns of his bullocks, his plough, his agricultural implements, and the furniture of the house. In Sonpur they make a heap of earth surrounded by 7 pegs, with a rope of straw wound round them. A post is erected, and every one tries to jump as

high as he can over the mound and the post. On this day all the boys walk about on stilts, the idea being that the crops will grow as high as the stilts. The latter are thrown into the river at the *Polā* festival, which takes place on Amāwasyā day in the month of Bhādra, *i.e.*, on the 15th day of the dark half of the month. To celebrate the festival, the villagers make images of cows and horses, take seven pots, make seven kinds of cakes, and offer them to the gods. Afterwards, the village boys drag about models of horses and carts, and play with them.

The *Nuākhiā* festival is observed in the second fortnight of Bhādra (August-September) on a day fixed by the astrologers. Cakes are made and offered, and a little new rice, mixed with milk, is eaten. The *jhānkar* provides the rice, for he reserves one plot in which to sow early rice, so that it will be ripe by this time. The villagers go to Samlāi's temple, where they present a coconut, and also offer rice to Devī. The lowest castes worship their household gods and do not join in the village worship.

Among aboriginal castes, the boys and girls go out to the jungle on the evening of the 11th day of Bhādra and cut a branch of a *karma* or *sāl* tree, or fell a young sapling. This they set up in the village, where it is worshipped, the villagers drinking and dancing round it all night. They pour liquor over it, and make offerings of rice and sweetmeats; a fowl is also killed, and the blood offered to the branch. In the morning the branch is taken away in procession and thrown into the village tank or the nearest stream. Songs are sung, drums are beaten, and the young people dance vigorously while coming and going with the branch. This is called the *Karma* or *Keli Kadam* festival, the story being that the goddess Karma-rānī once appeared to a man and promised that she would be present whenever a branch of the *sāl* tree was broken. A special feature of the festival is a long song praying for rain.

In the bright fortnight of Bhādra, after the *Karma* dance is over, the Binjhāls have a festival called the *Suā* dance. Young girls go about from village to village singing and dancing, accompanied by drummers and Gāndā musicians. They are entertained in each village that they visit, and are lodged comfortably for the night. Next morning they dance for 5 or 6 hours, and then proceed to another village, dancing, singing and beating drums.

Mahulgundi, also called *Gundikhiā*, is a festival observed on the full moon day of the month of Phālgun (February-March). On this day the people eat, for the first time in the year, new gram, the fruit of the mango, and, among the lower classes, the flower of the *mahuā* (*mahul*) tree and *chār*, just as new rice is

eaten on the *Nuākhiā* day later in the year. They are eaten by the male members and children of the family sitting together with their faces towards the east. The same articles are also offered, with cakes and a special kind of sweetmeat, called *sakarpati*, to the family deity and the village deity. On this occasion the Gonds go to Gichimora, offer a mixture of fruits (*gundi*) to Bura Deo, dance and drink liquor. This is an offering of the first fruits of the year and takes place at the same time as the *Holi*.

Another curious festival is that of a sub-caste of the Savarās, called Pātnār Savarā or Pataurīā Savarā, who go about dancing and charming snakes. Every third year they meet at Bandha near Khamunda, 8 miles from Bargarh, and stay there a month. Anyone who has committed an offence during the last three years is fined, and the proceeds are spent on providing liquor for the assembled Savarās. The method of ordeal is to mix some cow-dung with boiling water, and the man who is on trial has to plunge his hand into it. If his hand is burnt, he is guilty; but usually the water is not boiling.

The *Rath Jātrā* festival takes place on the 2nd day of the light part of the month of Asārh (June-July). This is an important festival in this district, and is a copy of the festival as observed in Purī. In the town of Sambalpur, and in villages where there are temples of Jagannāth, or of Jagannāth, Balabhadra and Subhadrā, cars are prepared for the festival, and on the *Rath Jātrā* day the images of the deities are seated on them. The cars are then dragged to the extremity of the town or village with music and dancing, and are there turned towards the south. This, it is said, is done so that Bibhīshan, king of Lanka (Ceylon) may see the images, for when Rāmchandra, after killing Rāvana and installing his brother Bibhīshan as king of Lankā, returned to his own kingdom, he promised Bibhīshan that he would be granted a glimpse of his person on this one day in the year. The people wear new clothes and eat rich food, and altogether it is a day of general festivity. The peasants of villages, where there are no temples of Jagannāth and no cars, go to the nearest village where the festival is observed and join in it there. The cars are dragged back eight days afterwards, this festival being called the *Bahūda Rath Jātrā.*

The *Dasaharā* festival is observed in the month of Aswin (September-October), commencing on the first day of the light part of the month and continuing up to the 10th day. The goddess Durgā is worshipped, and goats, and rarely buffaloes, are sacrificed to her. On the eighth day women and girls who

have brothers worship Durgā, fasting the whole day and praying for the prosperity of their brothers. This day is called the *Bhāi-jiuntiā* day. On the tenth day, when the worship of Durgā concludes, people of the town go to the temple of Samlāi, and it is also customary to pay visits to elderly persons. In the zamīndāris the *gaontiās* and *thikādārs* pay to their respective zamīndārs a customary cess called *Dasaharā dekhā*, consisting of money, goats, *ghī*, etc.

Pus Pūrnimā, *i.e.*, the full moon day of the month of Pus (December-January), is a day of joy and cheerfulness among the cultivating classes, because the year's agricultural work is practically over. On this day field labourers employed for the year are discharged; grain advances made to cultivators are repayable; and Brāhmans put on a new sacred thread.

CHAPTER IV.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

CLIMATE. SAMBALPUR has long had an unenviable reputation for unhealthiness. As early as 1766 we find it stated by Mr. Motte, in the first published account of the district, that the air was "very unwholesome owing to the great vicissitudes of heat and cold," that the inhabitants were subject to rheumatism, and that every man in his escort was affected by violent fevers.* Subsequent accounts are not less unfavourable. Not to multiply instances, a description of the country in 1841 says categorically that "the climate of Sambalpur is very pestiferous; indeed, so great is its unhealthiness that it has proved the grave of almost every European officer who has been stationed there."† It cannot be said, however, that the mortuary returns bear out these statements, for the death-rate reported is lower than in most Bengal districts, averaging only 20·72 per mille in the four years 1901—04, while it was 24·04 per mille in 1906 and 24·55 in 1907. It appears, indeed, that the district has been maligned and that it does not compare unfavourably with other districts of Bengal.

VITAL STATISTICS. The system of reporting vital statistics is the same as that adopted in the Central Provinces, in which the district was till recently included, and is different from that prevailing in Bengal. In rural areas the duty of reporting births and deaths devolves on the headmen of villages and village watchmen. The village watchman is supplied with a printed book in which entries of births and deaths are made as they occur by the headman, or, if he cannot read or write, by a *patwāri* or schoolmaster. At prescribed intervals, usually once a week, the village watchman takes his book to the police post to which his village is attached, and the entries are copied out into his vital statistics register by the police *muharrir*, who initials each entry in the books. The register is checked by the Superintendent of Vaccination, and any mistakes or omissions are corrected. Copies of the totals entered in the register are forwarded monthly to the

* Narrative of a Journey to the Diamond Mines at Sumbhulpoor, Asiatic Annual Register, 1799.

† Bengal and Agra Gazetteer (1841), Vol. II, p. 224.

Civil Surgeon's office at headquarters, where the district returns are made up. In municipal towns the duty of reporting births and deaths rests with the nearest male relative (above the age of 16 years) of the person born or deceased, and breach of this rule is punishable with fine, which may amount to Rs. 50. Reports are made to, and vital statistics maintained by, the police as in rural areas, and are checked by the municipal vaccinator.

According to the returns thus prepared, the highest birth-rate since 1891 has been 55·18 per mille in 1899 and the lowest 30·16 per mille in 1901. The highest death-rate recorded is 108·18 per mille in 1900, the abnormal mortality being due to a terrible epidemic of cholera, and to the weakliness of the crowds of wanderers who came into the district, during the famine of that year, from the surrounding States and districts. The next year witnessed the lowest death-rate yet recorded in the district, viz., 19·56 per mille. A curious feature of the returns is the difference between the birth-rate and death-rate in the *khālsa* and zamīndāris, as illustrated in the following statement showing the births and deaths per mille:—

Year.	Births.		Deaths.	
	Khālsa.	Zamīndāris.	*Khālsa.*	Zamīndāris.
1900	37·62	44·49	89·22	114·77
1901-04 (average) ...	36·62	51·94	19·58	22·98

According to the returns submitted year by year, the greatest mortality is caused by fever, which in 1907 gave a death-rate of 9·97 per mille out of the total death-rate of 24·55 per mille. The following account of the types of fever prevalent has been contributed by Captain F. H. Watling, I.M.S., recently Civil Surgeon of Sambalpur:—"The majority of cases of fever in the district are of the well known malarial types, and are caused by benign tertian, malignant tertian, and, very rarely, quartan fever parasites. The graver forms, viz., those caused by the malignant tertian parasite, prevail during the latter half of the monsoon and still more after it, *i.e.*, during September, October and November, and to a much less extent from December to the end of March. The period, April to July, is almost free from this type of fever. The milder forms, viz., those caused by the so-called benign tertian, occur throughout the year, but like the malignant types are most prevalent during and after the monsoon period, *i.e.*, during the seven months from August to March.

PRINCIPAL DISEASES.

Fever.

"As the result of these constantly prevailing malarial fevers, one would expect a very high spleen rate among children, but this is not the case here. The highest spleen rate I have seen among school children in the district was 11 per cent. at Balbaspur, a few miles from headquarters, and a notoriously insanitary place. I should say the average for the whole district is about 5 per cent.; these figures are for the period November to April (when the Civil Surgeon goes on tour). There is practically no sale of quinine in the district. As regards other complications, the liver is often affected, there being a varying amount of tenderness and hyperæmia. The other organs are unaffected. During the latter half of May and June a few cases of malarial fever of a hyperpyrexial type, with marked cerebral symptoms, occur. These cases are mostly fatal and are very like cases of heat-stroke.

"There is one fever of special interest, which occurs in the autumn (especially after an unusually hot dry summer) and is locally known as *motijhira*. It usually prevails in small epidemics, attacks either sex, and mostly young adults or older children. Its mode of onset, course and termination are exactly like typhoid fever; and the temperature follows a typical typhoid fever course. The points of difference are (1) absence of diarrhœa in almost every case; (2) the eruption appears from the fourth to eighth day (earlier than that of typhoid) on the chest, sides of neck and face, and then spreads over the rest of the body. It is popular and exactly resembles that of measles, except that it is more discrete and more distinct to sight and touch. The eruption continues for 3 weeks or as long as the fever lasts. The mortality is about 8 to 10 per cent. Quinine has no effect on this fever. The notes on this fever have kindly been given by Hospital Assistant Ganesh Prashād, who was twenty years in the district. I have seen no cases myself, but to my mind the clinical picture so closely resembles typhoid fever, that I would be chary of classing it otherwise without definite agglutination tests.

"The other fevers are few and unimportant. I saw one case of relapsing fever in a pilgrim returning from Purī. Occasionally when on tour I have come across cases of enormously enlarged spleens in subjects who are markedly anæmic and cachectic; and it is quite possible these were cases of the cachectic fever described by Major L. Rogers. No spleen punctures were made."

Other diseases. Among other common diseases may be mentioned dysentery and diarrhœa, respiratory diseases, skin diseases, rheumatic affections of a chronic type, and diseases of the eye. Dysentery and diarrhœa are unusually frequent and fatal, the death-rate in 1907 being 2·81 per mille. The prevalence of these and

other bowel complaints should probably be attributed to the impure source of drinking water-supply, for in this district the people almost invariably drink tank water, which in the not weather months becomes polluted, turgid and impure. Respiratory diseases are also responsible for a greater mortality than in other districts of Bengal, the death-rate in the same year being 1·22 per mille. Epidemics of cholera were formerly common, breaking out nearly every hot season owing to the train of pilgrims on their march to and from the temple of Jagannāth at Purī. Since the pilgrim traffic has been diverted to the railway, such epidemics are neither so frequent nor so deadly. Spleen is common in the jungly districts, where the water is impregnated with decaying vegetable matter. Syphilis is prevalent, and occasionally very bad forms are met with, which are probably due to the lack of proper treatment. Infirmities, such as blindness, leprosy, deaf-mutism and insanity, are comparatively rare. It is reported that leprosy appears to be more common south of the Sambalpur-Raipur road than north of it.

VILLAGE SANITATION.

Village sanitation is regulated by the Central Provinces Village Sanitation Act and the *Mukaddam* Rules, which are a legacy of the administration of the Central Provinces. It may be explained that in the Central Provinces Land Revenue Act, 1881 (amended by Act XVI of 1889), it is provided that the *mukaddam* or headman of the village has, among his other duties, "subject to any rules issued by the Chief Commissioner, to keep his village in good sanitary condition." This enables the Government or its officers to cause action to be taken in any small village in respect of any flagrant violation of sanitary principles. It is the headman who is responsible, and who must take action under the law. There are, however, many villages which are too large for the sanitation to be left in the hands of the *mukaddam*, and yet too small to come under the Central Provinces Municipal Act of 1889, which, like the Bengal Municipal Act of 1884, provides for large towns. They require systematic administration, involving a little taxation; and at the same time the elaborate machinery of the Municipal Act is unsuitable. For such villages the Village Sanitation Act (XI of 1902) was passed.

The principal provisions of this Act are that it may be extended to any insanitary village containing not less than 500 inhabited houses (section 2); that the administration of the Act shall be committed to a village *panchāyat* consisting of the *mukaddam* and representatives of the village elected by its inhabitants (section 3); that for this purpose funds shall be placed at their

disposal (sections 4 and 5), which may include an assessment on houses and land, and a levy of license fees on weighmen or measurers of goods brought for sale, of tolls on carts, pack-animals and potters bringing such goods, of market dues, *i.e.*, rents from temporary dealers, and of fees on the voluntary registration of cattle sales. The breach of the provisions of the Act is punishable by fine [section 7 (3) and section 9], and prosecutions may be instituted on the complaint either of the Deputy Commissioner or of the *panchāyat*, or of some persons authorized to act on behalf of either. The operation of the Act in the case of any village may be limited to simple conservancy, or it may be extended to include "the improvement of the water-supply or of the village roads, or any other work of public utility." Briefly, the Act authorizes the creation of a small fund to be expended on sanitation in important villages, which are not sufficiently large to be made municipal towns. The arrangements are in the hands of a small committee of the residents, and simple rules for the disposal of sewage, the protection of the water-supply, and the preservation of cleanliness in the village generally, are enforced. This Act is in force in Bargarh and Jharsagurā.

The *Mukaddam* Rules, which have been introduced in Barpāli and Padampur, provide for a house-tax and rate on rents, but do not provide for the appointment of a committee. Under these rules the headman is responsible for the enforcement of certain elementary sanitary precautions, and the villages under them are inspected by officers on tour to see that they are observed. It should be added that the *mukaddam* is responsible for the sanitation of every village, but has been empowered to maintain a special establishment only in the two places mentioned. The sanitary requirements are the same in either case, and both *mukaddams* and ryots may be punished for their neglect.

VACCINATION.

Vaccination is compulsory only in the municipal area of Sambalpur, but is carried on by itinerant paid vaccinators in the interior. Though regarded by certain sections of the community with some dislike, it cannot be said that there is any general antipathy to the operation. Speaking generally, there is no objection to the primary vaccination of children, but the people, as a rule, look upon revaccination with aversion. The number of persons successfully vaccinated in 1907-08 was 26,400, representing 42·37 per mille of the population, and it is noticeable that of these no less than 1,942 were cases of revaccination. In the same year protection was afforded to as many as 925 per thousand of

infants, and no other Bengal district except Rānchī had such a good record.

Inoculation for small-pox was formerly practised, but has now disappeared. How common it used to be may be gathered from the following account in a Report on the Medical Topography of the South-Western Political Districts by Mr. J. Shortt, Assistant Surgeon, 1855:—"Small-pox devastates whole villages, and hence small-pox inoculation is practised, and is the chief source of contagion, from whence the disease propagates itself far and wide. It is practised by ticcadars, who make it their means of livelihood. The practice is compulsory, that a member of a family is bound to follow in the same occupation as his predecessors for the maintenance of himself and family. Vaccination is not known, nay, more correctly speaking, has never been heard of in these parts. From personal interview with ticcadars, they as well as the people, on its being explained to them, had no objection to vaccination being substituted for inoculation. The people dread the present practice, yet, the evil being a necessary one, they are obliged to resort to it."

Charitable dispensaries have been established at Sambalpur, Bargarh, Jharsagurā and Padampur in the Borāsāmbar zamīndāri. There is also a leper asylum at Sambalpur maintained by private subscriptions and from the rent of a bungalow left for the purpose by Mr. Goodridge. Particulars of the working of the charitable dispensaries may be gathered from the following table which gives the salient statistics for 1907:— MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS.

Dispensary.	Beds.		Total number treated.	Daily average.		Receipts.	Expenditure.
	Males.	Females.		Out-patients.	In-patients.		
						Rs.	Rs.
Sambalpur ...	16	8	33,706	154	20	6,833	4,815
Bargarh ...	4	2	14,512	55	2	1,719	1,054
Jharsagurā ...	...	...	5,363	41	...	1,184	910
Padampur ...	3	3	4,625	17	1	947	947

CHAPTER V.

FORESTS.

RESERVED FORESTS.

General description.

THE reserved forests of Sambalpur extend over 396 square miles, and are situated on the Bārapahār hills in the north of the Bargarh subdivision and on the ranges in the east and south of the Sambalpur subdivision. There are two types of forest, one consisting of *sāl* (*Shorea robusta*) interspersed with bamboos and other trees, and the other being mixed forest of bamboos and inferior species. *Sāl* forest, which thrives best on well-drained slopes of sandy loam, occupies all the hills and valleys of the Sambalpur range and the principal valleys of the Bārapahār range, with an aggregate area of about 238 square miles. The mixed forest is situated on the dry rocky hills of the Bārapahār range, where *sāl* will not grow, and covers 155 square miles. For administrative purposes the forests are divided into 2 ranges and 43 blocks. Ten of these blocks are situated in the Bargarh subdivision, where eight of them form the Bārapahār range; and the Sambalpur subdivision contains 33 blocks, which, with the remaining two blocks in the Bargarh subdivision, make up the Sambalpur range. The area of the two ranges is 212 and 182 square miles respectively. The Bārapahār forest is composed of a large, compact group of blocks to the west of the Mahānadī river, while the Sambalpur range includes a number of detached blocks of various sizes, which for the most part occupy hilly, or more or less broken ground to the east of that river.

History of conservancy.

Forest conservancy appears to have been neglected during the early years of British administration in this district. In 1866 the Settlement Commissioner raised the question of the advisability of Government setting aside and conserving waste lands to which neither private persons nor village communities could lay claim. The selection of such lands was finally carried out in the course of the settlement operations between 1872 and 1876, and is described by the Settlement

The account of the reserved forests is mainly a reproduction of a note kindly contributed by Mr. A. L. McIntire, Conservator of Forests, Bengal.

Officer as follows:—"As the villages in the *khālsa* (the term used for villages held direct from Government by village headmen) were being inspected preparatory to assessment, the opportunity was taken of examining hill, waste and forest-covered tracts. In doing so, the wants and requirements of the people in the neighbourhood were fully taken into consideration. The operation of excluding waste lands was necessarily confined to hill and jungle tracts, which had notoriously been in the actual possession of no individual or community, which had hitherto in fact been common property, to which any body that liked resorted, cut timber, wood, grass, bamboos, made *dahi* fields and *rambhās* (hill slopes sown with Indian corn, castor and cucumbers), and, in fact, helped themselves to anything they wanted, without let or hindrance from any one. In such tracts it was that the rights of the State were asserted. The selected tracts were demarcated separately from village areas, and were declared to be the property of Government." The forests were notified as reserved forests under the Forest Act in 1878, a revised notification being issued in 1897.

In selecting them many Government waste lands, mostly wooded, were excluded and allowed to form part of the *gaontiāhi* villages, and the large forests in the zamīndāris, the owners or occupants of which could claim the ownership of waste lands, were not affected. The principal objects of reservation appear to have been the preservation of the sources from which the inhabitants of the district derive a supply of forest produce, and the securing of the indirect advantages which are generally believed to result from forest protection, such as an increased and well-distributed rainfall, the safety of slopes, and the preservation of sources of water-supply.

Commutation and stamp system.

Until 1887, when a Forest Officer was appointed, the reserves were managed by the revenue officials with the help of a very small staff of subordinates; and inhabitants of the district were allowed to cut and collect produce in them, and to graze their cattle as much as they liked, on payment of a fee of four annas a year on each plough or roof. The latter is known as a commutation fee, because the villagers are allowed to commute for their annual supply of fuel and timber for home consumption on payment of a fixed sum. The appointment of a Forest Officer led to the formation of the Sambalpur Forest Division and the introduction of the forest stamp system, which is a feature of forest management in the Central Provinces. Under this system respectable inhabitants of conveniently situated villages are appointed forest license-vendors. They supply applicants with

licenses to cut and remove such produce as the latter may require on payment at rates specified in an authorized schedule of prices; and they place on each license forest stamps, which they can purchase from the treasury, of the value of the produce covered by the license. Their remuneration consists of a commission (generally one anna in the rupee) on the amount spent by them on purchasing stamps from the treasury. This system, as it obliged villagers to pay for every thing they removed from the reserves, and led to the reservation of the more valuable kinds of trees, was a great improvement on the commutation system.

Management. A further improvement was effected by attempting to protect a part of the forests from fire. But no attempt was made to introduce located fellings or to regulate grazing till 1898, when sanction was given to a working plan for the Bārapahār and neighbouring forests, which form the Bārapahār range. This working plan prescribed coppice fellings in small areas, and improvement fellings in some other areas, but made no arrangement for the management of the greater part of the range; and when it was sought to carry out its provisions, it was quickly discovered that the demand for poles and firewood was insufficient to justify them. Hence there have been various modifications of the plan, of which the only practical effect has been to restrict the cutting of green trees to areas sufficient to supply demands in the localities concerned and to permit of the subsequent closure to grazing of areas so cut over. Similar arrangements have also been made in parts of other forests, *i.e.*, in the Sambalpur range, where they appeared to be justified by local demands; and in this latter range efforts were also made, between 1900 and 1905, to increase revenue by cutting into railway sleepers any large-sized *sāl* trees which could be found.

Since 1905 it has been sought to introduce a better regulation of fellings of all descriptions. But such efforts are greatly hindered by the fact that large numbers of the inhabitants of the district can still obtain all the forest produce they require from village lands or the zamīndāri forests, or live at such distances from the reserves that they cannot readily make use of the latter. In fact, bamboos are still the only product of the reserves for which there can be said to be a general demand. It has also been sought to select for special management areas which, while they are unlikely to have to meet a large local demand, appear to be suitable for producing *sāl* timber for export, and to close such areas to grazing as far as possible. It is estimated that the total area now available for this kind of management is between 50

and 60 square miles. At the same time, the exclusion of goats and sheep from the reserves has been carried out; fire protection has been improved, the area under special protection being now 302 square miles (which will shortly be increased); and arrangements have been made to acquire a number of small villages enclosed in the Bārapahār forest, which have long been sources of danger to that forest.

The most important tree in the reserves is *sāl* or *rengāl* (*Shorea robusta*), which is found in greater or less abundance in most parts of the Sambalpur range and in the lower parts of the Bārapahār forest. Other trees having a value for export are *piāsāl* or *bijā* (*Pterocarpus Marsupium*), which is scattered over most of the slopes and is fairly abundant in parts of the Bārapahār forest; *sisū* (*Dalbergia Sissoo*), which has much the same distribution as *piāsāl*, though it is rarer than the latter; and *bhirā* (*Chloroxylon Swietenia*), which is well represented on small areas scattered throughout the forests. Besides these, there are a number of inferior kinds of trees, which are used locally for house-building, for making agricultural implements, and for fuel, *e.g.*, *garāri* (*Cleistanthus collinus*), *sāj* or *sāhāj* (*Terminalia tomentosa*); *kendu* (*Diospyros Melanoxylon*), *senha* (*Lagerstrœmia parviflora*), and many others. Bamboos (*Dendrocalamus strictus*) also abound on nearly all the slopes and ridges; and teak is found in one small forest near Sambalpur. **Forest produce.**

Sāl is, as a rule, only represented by poles and small trees up to 3 or 4 feet in girth; and so far as the greater part of the area is concerned, it appears doubtful whether fine trees yielding timber suitable for export will ever be grown. But in the areas, aggregating 50 to 60 square miles, which are under selection in the Sambalpur range for special management, conditions appear to be more hopeful. Such areas generally contain, besides considerable numbers of promising young trees, up to 3 feet or rather more in girth, a sprinkling of large, often well-grown, *sāl* trees. The almost universal rottenness of these large trees may reasonably be attributed to past burning and the system of shifting cultivation known as *jhūm*, and to the persistent cutting out of the soundest trees before the forests were protected. Of other kinds of trees all that it is necessary to note is that, though fair-sized specimens of all species are to be found here and there, they are usually represented by miniature or ill-formed trees or poles. Generally, the incompleteness of the crop, the scarcity of large, well-grown trees, and the relative abundance of ill-formed trees of small or moderate size, afford abundant evidence of the abuses to which the forests have till quite recently been exposed. **Prospects.**

It is, however, clear that, though in many places grazing retards their improvement, the forests are slowly recovering. Seedlings of most kinds of trees, especially of *sāl* in the places where that tree is largely represented, are becoming numerous, and it is probable that in about 20 years nearly all parts of the forests, excepting relatively small areas where the soil is very poor indeed, and larger areas where bamboos have become very dense, will be well stocked with young trees of various kinds. As the demands of villagers increase—and they are almost certain to increase owing to the continued exhaustion of outside sources of supply and increased wants—it will be comparatively easy to regulate fellings, so as to meet their requirements and provide for the improvement of the forests. And though it will take long, probably 40 to 50 years, to produce any considerable quantity of large timber for export, a slow but steady increase in exports of *sāl*, *bijā*, *sisū*, and possibly also *bhirā*, may be expected.

Revenue.

In the past most of the revenue has been derived from sales of produce, especially bamboos, at low prices, under the forest stamp system, to residents of the district, though the sleeper works already referred to gave some assistance. In the 10 years ending in 1904-05, the average revenue, expenditure and surplus of the Sambalpur Division were Rs. 28,979, Rs. 24,809 and Rs. 4,170 respectively. In the subsequent two years sleeper-cutting was stopped, but the loss of revenue caused in this way was more than made good by increased local sales under the stamp system and by sales of the produce of moderate improvement fellings in the more promising *sāl* areas of the Sambalpur range. The average revenue, expenditure and surplus for these two years have been Rs. 34,542, Rs. 26,622 and Rs. 7,902 respectively. There is every reason to anticipate a gradual increase in the revenue and surplus, and the latter is almost certain to attain a respectable figure in the course of the next 40 to 50 years. But forest management in the Sambalpur district is mainly justified by the consideration that without it all forests would eventually be destroyed; and even if their destruction resulted in no other disadvantages, the exhaustion of local supplies of forest produce would be a very serious blow to the prosperity of the district.

ZAMINDARI FORESTS.

At the first settlement of the district it appears to have been the intention of Government, in dealing with zamīndāri forests, to allot for the use of the estate a sufficient area of forest land, and to exclude the remainder as Government forest. Subsequently, however, the intention of forming separate State reserves from the zamīndāri forests was abandoned, and it was decided that the whole forest area was to be left to the zamīndār,

but that in order to mark the right of the State to share in the produce of the forests, and to guard against the infringement of that right, the forests were to be separately assessed, and to be settled for periods of three years only. These orders were, however, only so far carried out in Sambalpur as to assess a forest *takoli* separately from the land revenue *takoli*. No attempt was made to demarcate the forests, nor were the *takolis* made liable to triennial revision.

At the next settlement (1885-89) it was determined to give more complete effect to this policy, and orders were issued laying down that "all extensive tracts of jungle included in a zamīndāri should be declared to form a separate forest *mahāl*. For this purpose it is not necessary that the limits of such tracts should be precisely defined, and, in zamīndāris which have not been surveyed, it will suffice if the position and extent of each forest tract be described by the assessing officer as clearly as may be with reference to the villages which adjoin it and any prominent natural features. A brief description of the character and capabilities of each forest tract should also be recorded. An estimate should then be framed of the income derived by the zamīndār from the forest *mahāl* of his estate, and a *takoli* be assessed on the basis of this estimate, having reference of course to the amount of the forest *takoli* paid at present. Speaking generally, the share of the forest income taken as *takoli* should be from 40 to 60 per cent., but the Chief Commissioner would be prepared to sanction considerable deviations from this." The engagement for the payment of forest *takoli* was to contain a stipulation binding the zamīndār to manage in accordance with the orders of Government. Subsequently, the zamīndāri forest *mahāls*, as formed by the Settlement Officer, were formally declared to be forest *mahāls* within the meaning of section 46 of the Central Provinces Land Revenue Act, and rules of management were issued under section 124A of that Act.

In accordance with the above orders, the amount of the forest income of the zamīndāris was roughly ascertained during the settlement of 1885-89, and a small assessment was fixed on it independently of the land assessment. It was apparently intended to revise triennially the assessment on a source of income which promised rapid development; but that policy was not carried out, the *takoli* fixed in 1885-89 remaining unaltered till the recent settlement. The procedure now followed is to ascertain as closely as possible the average gross income of the forests, to deduct from this the cost of the forest establishment maintained, to treat the remaining net income as assets, and to fix on it a proprietary

kāmil-jamā, *i.e.*, the full assessment which a zamīndār would pay if he had no feudal status but held as an ordinary proprietor.

The area of the zamīndāri forests is 375 square miles, but of the sixteen zamīndāris in the district only nine possess forests which yield an annual income, viz., Borāsāmbar, Ghes, Kolābirā, Kodābāga, Lairā, Loisingh, Machidā, Rājpur and Rāmpur. They contain practically the same species of trees as the Government reserved forests. The value of the zamīndāri forests, especially in the Borāsāmbar estate, is considerable; but until communications are improved, no large export of timber from that estate is possible. Other estates, however, such as Kolābirā, Rājpur and Rāmpur are situated along or close to the railway. Those in the Sambalpur subdivision are at present of considerable use not only to cultivators in the zamīndāris, but also to those residing in *khālsa* villages in the neighbourhood, who usually find it more convenient to deal with the zamīndārs than with the Government Forest Department.

VILLAGE FORESTS. The village forests comprised in the *khālsa* area outside the reserves, which are either *khālsa gaontiāhi* or *mālguzāri*, are of much less value. Throughout the *khālsa* area in the Bargarh plain all valuable forest has long been cleared. Much of this area is now cultivated; and though there are extensive tracts of scrub-jungle in the immediate neighbourhood of the reserves, all good timber has been cut out, and no replanting is ever done. These tracts are not culturable, and it is a misfortune that their timber should not have been conserved. The direct consequence is that villages in the most populous and closely cultivated part of the district have now no timber, bamboos, or even light fencing material near them, and cultivators have to cart what they need at considerable expense from distant Government reserves. In the Sambalpur subdivision conditions are not so bad; but the village forests here also are being rapidly cut out. In this latter tract the only *mālguzāri* forest of any extent or value now existing is that of the Tāmpargarh estate.

FUEL AND FODDER RESERVES. At the settlement of 1885-89, 16 fuel and fodder reserves, with an area of 11,000 acres, were set aside, but no arrangement was made to regulate the use of their produce. Many orders were passed, but nothing was done to enforce them. The area reserved, moreover, consisted chiefly of bare boulders incapable of bearing either timber or forage; and what growth there was has been cut out exactly as in the village forests.

SYSTEM OF MANAGEMENT. It is reported that the methods of upkeep both in fuel and fodder reserves and in village forests are not all that could be desired. Nominally, these areas are Government property (except

in the case of the few *mālguzāri* estates of the district), and any overcutting or bad management on the part of the headmen of villages can be met by the Deputy Commissioner taking the forests under direct management. But this provision is not a practical one where there are a number of small scattered forests, and no special staff is maintained; for the Land Records staff is not strong enough to manage adequately village forests in addition to its present work.

The steps taken at the settlement recently concluded in order to prevent the misuse of these forests are described as follows by the Settlement Officer:—"The ill-effects of deforestation in the Bargarh plain pointed to the necessity for checking very carefully the boundaries of the village forests. In very many cases these were found to have been encroached upon for cultivation without competent permission. It is unfortunate that the wording of the detailed rules framed under section 124A of the Central Provinces Land Revenue Act has hitherto prevented their application to the villages and forests of Sambalpur, which are held by *gaontiās*, not as proprietors but as trustees. At this revision the general rule of the trust has been clearly restated. It points out that the produce of the forest of a *gaontiāhi* village cannot be exported, but must be used only for domestic and agricultural needs within the village itself. It has been proposed by several *gaontiās* living in one village to bring timber for domestic use from the forest of another village under their management. Brāhman *gaontiās* living in Sambalpur town wish to export wood from their villages to their houses. But as the trust is now frequently abused by the illegal sale of timber, the extension of the rule has not been considered advisable."

GENERAL CONDITIONS.

The following account of the general conditions obtaining is quoted from Mr. Dewar's Settlement Report:—"The district is still well wooded, but of late years cultivation has greatly extended, and in the more level tracts there are now no patches of timber-forest among the villages. Over the whole of the *khālsa* area outside the Government reserves there are about 124 square miles of "big-tree-jungle" and 333 square miles of scrub. But the latter area is all but useless, and the former is confined to parts of the eastern *tahsīl*. At last settlement certain fuel and fodder reserves were excised from villages in the more open tracts. But their area was very small, their surface consisted almost entirely of bare rock, and they now grow no timber and but little fodder. The needs of the cultivator are met almost entirely from the Government reserves, which cover 396 square miles, and from the zamīndāri forests which, excluding those

of Phuljhar, cover 375 square miles. East of the Mahānadī the villages deal chiefly with the zamīndāri forests or with those of neighbouring States, because the prices exacted are usually lower than those of Government, and the conditions of sale are much more free and elastic, and give less scope to the delays and exactions of underlings. In the Bargarh plain all except the western villages get their supplies from the Government reserve in the Bārāphār range.

"The chief requirement is the bamboo, for the wattling of house-walls and roofs, for screens, baskets and mats, and for the fencing of vegetable gardens and cane-fields. It is abundant in all forests. So too is the class of small second-rate timber, such as the *karla*, *dhāora*, and *senha*, which are used for house-timber and carts. The *sāj* is also plentiful, and the *kusum*, which is used for ploughs, cane-mills, and other implements of hard wood. There is at present no large supply of big timber for export. The Government forests consist largely of steep and rocky hills, and have not been long under careful conservation. Most of the zamīndārs with estates near the railway have in the past years acted on the principle that "timber is an excrescence of the earth provided by God for the payment of debts." Their forests are now thin. There is no teak, the most valuable timber trees being the *sāl* or *rengāl* and the *bijā*. Of these there is a good stock of saplings in the forests east of the Mahānadī, but it will be some years before their growth will permit of sleeper-cutting on a large scale. The big estate of Borāsāmbar has fair timber forests, which have of late been opened up, but their distance from a railway prevents full exploitation. Of miscellaneous forest produce, such as lac and myrobalans, there is but little export."

CHAPTER VI.

AGRICULTURE.

THE district consists of an undulating upland plain, broken by rugged ranges of hills and isolated peaks, and intersected in every direction by drainage channels leading to the Mahānadī. A considerable portion of the area consists of ground which is too much broken up by ravines to be banked into rice fields or of broad sandy ridges, which are agriculturally of very little value. The configuration of the country is, however, exceedingly well adapted for tank making, and the number of village tanks is one of the most prominent features. The low lands are generally cultivated with rice, and are skilfully embanked, manured and irrigated. The uplands are much less carefully cultivated, are not embanked, and grow miscellaneous crops, such as pulses, sesamum, coarse rice and cotton. When the ground is newly broken, good crops are secured for several years with very little labour and no manure; but the soil is speedily exhausted, and chance cropping is the rule in all the more closely settled tracts. In soil and lie of surface the western portion of the district, comprised in the Bargarh subdivision, is inferior to the country lying round Sambalpur and to the north of the Bārapahār hills. GENERAL CONDITIONS.

In the greater part of the Bargarh subdivision the country has a very decided slope, and is much cut up by ravines and watercourses; the soil is light and sandy, and the proportion of practically uncultivable land is large. In the Sambalpur *tahsīl* the soil is, as a rule, richer, because it contains more decayed vegetable matter washed down from the wooded uplands; while the land round Sambalpur itself and a strip running along the bank of the Mahānadī are much more productive, being fairly level and mostly fit for rice cultivation.

As explained in Chapter I, there are four minor divisions, the agricultural conditions of which differ very largely, viz., (1) the Bargarh plain, (2) Borāsāmbar, (3) Ambābhonā and Lakhanpur, and (4) the Sambalpur *tahsīl*. TRACTS OF FERTILITY.

The Bargarh plain is a large and fertile tract containing one-third of the entire cultivated area. It is drained by the Dantā and Jīrā rivers and by a number of small tributaries,

which are, however, of little use for irrigation, and during September and October suck away the water that is needed for the rice fields on their banks. The soil is a good light rice soil, and in the numerous depressions is very productive. Sub-soil water is within easy reach, and cheap irrigation wells, not deeper than 20 feet, hold water throughout the hot weather. Reckless deforestation, however, has gone on for last 30 years and has seriously affected cultivation in three ways. It has prejudiced the cultivation of sugarcane by making its fencing expensive. The loss of firewood has driven the poorer classes to the use of cow-dung for fuel, with the result that there is now no manure to spare for the light-soiled uplands, which formerly grew cotton. Lastly, it is said that the southern villages, which have the deepest soil and are most closely cultivated, now receive a shorter rainfall than they used to have. On the other hand, the undulating character of the country is admirably adapted for the construction of irrigation reservoirs, and the cultivators have taken full advantage of these natural facilities. There are hundreds of big tanks commanding the deeper rice lands, and thousands of smaller tanks above the numerous depressions.

Conditions are very different in Borāsāmbar, which is a hilly tract, chiefly inhabited by aboriginals, in which agriculture is in a backward state. There is a wide valley to the east formed by the Ang river, and this is the most fertile portion of the estate, for its soil contains river silt and is enriched by hill drainage. In the third tract there is a fairly level expanse in Ambābhonā sloping down from the hills to the river, with shallow soil and outcrops of sandstone rock. Its soil does not differ much from that of the southern plain, its cultivation is equally close, and it has several good irrigation tanks. In the Lakhanpur outpost most of the villages lie in a wide valley surrounded by hills, but some are found along the bank of the Mahānadī, and others are mere forest clearings; but most of the latter have now been acquired for the Forest Department.

In the Sambalpur *tahsīl* the land near the Mahānadī and Ib rivers contains rich silt, but elsewhere in the more open tracts, the soil is very much the same as that of the Bargarh plain, except that it contains more gravel and less sand. Hills and forests are scattered over the north, east and south, from which a large amount of vegetable silt is washed down every year into the fields of the nearer villages. Many of the inland villages, moreover, which only of late years are being fully developed, have a fine brown loam that is exceptionally fertile. The irrigation tanks are as numerous and good as those of Bargarh,

but are less needed, because the rainfall of this more easterly tract is comparatively heavy and regular.

The black soil which forms so marked a feature in the adjoining districts of the Central Provinces is almost unknown in Sambalpur. It occurs in the north-west of the district beyond the range of Vindhyan sandstone which shuts off the Ambābhonā valley, and across the Mahānadī towards the Bilāspur border. The soil which covers the greater part of the country is apparently derived from underlying metamorphic rocks, and the differences found in it are mainly due to the elimination and transportation effected by surface drainage. The finer particles have been carried into the low-lying areas along drainage lines, rendering the soil of a clayey texture, and leaving the uplands light and sandy. SOILS.

The most usual classification of the soils of the district is based on their position or level. This is an important consideration to the cultivator, since the country is undulating, except along the banks of the larger rivers, and consists of ridges and slopes and of the depressions between them. The four main divisions are *āt*, *māl*, *bernā* and *bāhāl*. *At* land consists of high-lying land on a watershed, *i.e.*, the uplands which are dependent for moisture on rainfall. They are, as a rule, sandy, and are cultivated with oil-seeds, cotton and pulses. The term *māl* is used for the slopes which are terraced to catch the surface drainage coming down from the uplands. The lower terraces are wider and deeper than the upper, and cultivators carefully recognize the great difference in fertility and in security of cropping between them, even distinguishing seed varieties for *tikra māl* and *samān* (level) *māl*. The higher *māl* lands are light and dry, yielding light early crops, which receive little more attention than the chance crops on unembanked *āt* land. The lower *māl* lands, called *pita māl*, get excellent drainage and grow good varieties of rice. The term *bernā* denotes lands towards the bottom of a depression, which receive the drainage from the slopes on either side and also from the drainage line between them. *Bernā* lands vary considerably according to their steepness and the stage of their development. In land newly broken up they are liable to have sand and gravel washed into them, but where it is under close cultivation the embankments of the terraced slopes prevent this. *Bāhāl* is a term used for flat land at the bottom of a depression or drainage line; the chief distinction between *bernā* and *bāhāl* being that the former is narrow and steep, and the latter wide and all but level. There is also a considerable difference between a wide *bāhāl*, lying between long slopes and receiving ample

drainage from them, and a narrow *bāhāl* lying between short steep slopes. Also, the best *bāhāl* lands are served by the widest and largest irrigation reservoirs, and so are secure from crop failure.

Bāhāl, *bernā* and *māl* lands are, as a rule, under rice, for the wash of rain tends to bring a detritus of fertile silt down to them, while *āt* lands are used for other crops which are less dependent on moisture. Throughout the district there is more variation in the unembanked *āt* land, growing light miscellaneous crops, than in the rice land. Its soil in a closely cultivated tract is often little better than exhausted sand or gravel. In hilly wooded country it is more fertile, but its crops suffer from the depredations of wild animals. On the banks of the larger rivers it resembles good silt, but is subject to floods.

Two other classes of soil are those known as *khari* and *bāri*. *Khari* is a term used for land situated near the village site, which receives the drainage of its streets and the washings from its houses; such land, when under irrigation, is called *khari pāni*. *Bāri* denotes vegetable gardens, generally occupying high land close to the homesteads, which are enriched by the village drainage and can grow two or three valuable crops every year.

A further classification of soils is based on quality; but this is not so commonly recognized as that of position, which is the all-important factor in an undulating country such as Sambalpur. The cultivators themselves recognize five classes, viz., *barmatta*, *khalliā*, *pandkapitia*, *rugri* and *bāliā*. *Barmatta* means merely good soil, and is a mixture of clay and sand containing a large proportion of vegetable matter, its excellence being due to long tilth. *Khalliā*, or clay, is a soil in which the bluish clay sub-soil of the district predominates. *Rugri* and *bāliā* are equivalent to gravel and sand, and *pandkapitia*, or "dove's back colour," is a made soil consisting of clay brought up by the plough and of sand and gravel brought down by surface drainage. The soil last named is found in nine-tenths of the cultivated area.

RAIN-FALL.

As no less than 72 per cent. of the cultivated area is under rice, water is a far more important factor than soil, and an ample and well-distributed rainfall is a matter of vital importance to the cultivators. The rains usually break in the second fortnight of June or early in July, and the rain of July is almost invariably heavy. August and September are the critical months, for though the cultivator can to a certain extent make up for a short or late rainfall by the use of tanks, the area fully protected by them is small and the lack of two inches of rain, or its delay by two days, may do great damage. The October showers are seldom heavy, and are

of importance only after a dry September to revive the rice of the bottom lands and to secure the pulses and oil-seeds. From October to January little or no rain falls, but it is usual to have some showers at the end of January or in February. These showers and the periodic rain storms of the hot weather months enable the cultivator to plough his land before sowing time.

As explained in Chapter I, there is a marked difference between the rainfall of the east and west of the district, the former having a heavier and also steadier rainfall than the latter. Serious shortage of rain has not been known to occur in the eastern *tahsīl* nor in that part of Bargarh which lies within 20 miles of the Mahānadī. The northern part of the Bargarh *tahsīl* also is fairly secure, probably owing to the neighbourhood of high hills. But all the south and west of the Bargarh plain and the zamīndāri of Borāsāmbar have repeatedly suffered.

In most years the amount of rainfall is sufficient, the average for the whole district being 58·49 inches, but it is often unevenly distributed, and deficiency in the critical months is fatal to the crops. To provide against its vicissitudes, artificial irrigation is absolutely necessary, and it is not too much to say that the very existence of villages over a large portion of the cultivated area is dependent on the tanks which have been constructed round them. Fortunately, artificial irrigation has been and is being well developed, no less than 112,515 acres being irrigable from tanks and wells in the *khālsa* area alone, as compared with 73,105 acres 20 years ago, representing an increase of 54 per cent. There are now 5,572 tanks in the *khālsa*, representing an average of nearly 3 tanks to every village, besides 8,116 wells, as against 3,616 tanks and 839 wells in 1889. The advance is most striking in the Bargarh *tahsīl*, where tanks have increased from 1,697 to 2,965, and wells from 204 to 6,034. It is reported that 60 per cent. of the *bāhāl* land, 30 per cent. of the *bernā* land, and 12 per cent. of *māl* land is irrigated. IRRIGATION.

There is a great difference between the methods of irrigation practised by the Aghariā immigrants from Chhattīsgarh, who have settled in the flatter riparian tracts to the north, and by the Oriyā Kultās, who prefer a comparatively undulating country. The Aghariā works only on rich soil, and this he finds in the level tracts which the Kultā avoids. The latter depends almost entirely on his water-supply, and likes rolling country with surface drainage and shallow sub-soil water. The Aghariā is a poor tank-builder, and constructs only the shallow square tank commonly used in Raipur and Bilāspur, which gathers no surface drainage, depends altogether on direct

rainfall, and fails in a year of short rainfall. One glance at a stretch of rice fields suffices to distinguish Kultā from Aghariā cultivation. The former builds only low and narrow banks between his fields, seldom more than two feet high, because he has frequently to cut them in order to pass his irrigation-water from plot to plot. The Aghariā builds high field boundaries, making a tank of each field, because each must catch and keep its rainfall. The two systems suit the tracts to which they are applied. In any ordinarily favourable year the Aghariā reaps the heavier crop, but in a bad year he loses more than the Kultā does.

Irrigation from tanks.

Kātā.

There are three kinds of tanks in the district, viz, the *kātā*, *mundā* and *bāndh*, of which the following is a brief description. An ordinary irrigation tank, which is known as a *kātā*, is constructed by throwing a strong earthen embankment, slightly curved at either end, across a drainage line, so as to hold up an irregularly shaped sheet of water. The undulations of the country usually determine its shape as that of a long isosceles triangle of which the dam is the base. It commands a valley, the bottom of which is the *bāhāl* land and the sides of which are the *māl* terraces. As a rule, there is a cutting high up the slope near one end of the embankment. From this the water is led either by a small channel or *tāl*, or from field to field along the terraces, down which it finds its way to the lower land. In ordinary years irrigation may be entirely unnecessary, and in that case the superfluous water is passed along until it falls into the nullah in which the small valley ends. In years of short rainfall the centre of the tank is sometimes cut through, when the bottom lands need irrigation, but in ordinary years such an expedient would be dangerous, for the water is deepest at the centre and no sluices are used. Such tanks supply water to at least 5 acres and usually to an area of 30 to 200 acres.

Mundā.

The *mundā* is an embankment of smaller size across a drainage channel. Embankments of this sort are very common, as they can easily be constructed by the ryots themselves for the benefit of their own holdings. These men have perhaps a few fields commanded by the main village tank, but have built *mundās* to protect their outlying fields, more recently acquired from others or reclaimed from the waste. For its purpose the *mundā* is useful, for, if a failure of rain is not very serious, it may provide water enough in the later months of growth to save the crop. But it is necessarily shallow and cannot give a certain supply.

Bāndh.

The *bāndh* is a four-sided tank excavated below the *kātā*, from which it derives its water by percolation. They are almost invariably used for drinking purposes only, are properly regarded

as suitable monuments of piety or charity, and are invariably consecrated or married to a god. Apart from their obvious sanitary advantages, they add to the irrigated area by spreading percolation and by rendering it possible in years of drought to empty the irrigation tank completely without danger.

Administration of tanks. The construction of tanks is of such vital importance in this district that special concessions have been made to encourage it. Land made irrigable by tank construction is secured against assessment at irrigated rates at the ensuing settlement; and, in addition to this, it has been ruled for ryotwāri villages, under articles 390 and 402 of the Central Provinces Settlement Code, that a *gaontiā* or ryot who makes a tank on his land is entitled to remission of the revenue on the area submerged from the date on which the tank is completed. The distribution of water from the public tanks has hitherto been left in the hands of the *panch* or village committee, and though this gives rise to much contention in a year of drought, no more impartial and expert agency is available. Such an arrangement is necessary, for it is impossible to state definitely for every year what blocks of fields should first be irrigated from the public tanks. This is a question which depends largely on the various conditions of each year's rainfall, on the state of each tank, and on the state of the crops.

As regards the maintenance of tanks, the Settlement Officer writes as follows :—

"At last settlement all the old tanks not constructed on the proprietary land of *gaontiās* were regarded as public property and were recorded as the property of Government. This step, intended to prevent selfish or short-sighted misuse and encroachment, has probably been of real service. But encroachment on the beds of public tanks has been the rule rather than the exception. Many cases have come to light in which parts of the beds of the old tanks, temporarily cropped at last settlement, were then entered in private holdings. It has been found to be impossible to legally dispossess the encroachers, and, as they can now claim damages if their crops are submerged, many *gaontiās* who wish to restore old tanks to their former level are deterred from doing so. The abuse is a result of the imperfect system of repair adopted by the villagers. As they have pressing need for irrigation only once or twice in eight or ten years, they do not annually repair embankments, but allow them to lose a few inches every year by the wash of rain, until the water-level has fallen two or three feet, when a subscription is called for and the earthwork made up. But in the intervening years, the falling water exposes round the upper edge of the tank a strip of rich

land into which the nearest cultivators are tempted to turn their ploughs, the *gaontiā* himself being not infrequently a transgressor."

Wells.

Apart from tanks, the district has special irrigational advantages in the ease and cheapness with which wells can be sunk. Its sandy soil holds in most places a plentiful store of sub-soil water at no great depth (15 to 20 feet) from the surface, and a well which will last for several years can be sunk for Rs. 40 or Rs. 50. Such wells hold water through the hot weather and are largely used for the irrigation of sugarcane plots. Temporary wells are also sometimes used for the irrigation of rice in the tracts near the Mahānadī where water is found close to the surface.

Other means of irrigation are of little importance, but temporary dams are built across the Jangmār and Sursutiā nullahs near Machidā, and across a nullah near Ghes, by means of which the water is diverted and carried into the fields. For raising water from a lower to a higher level the common lever lift called *tendā* is used. This consists of a long pole poised between two uprights and weighted at its lower end, and is used invariably whether water is required from a well or from a tank. Where there is only a small difference of level, baskets (*sendā*) worked by two men are often used.

PRINCIPAL CROPS.

The following statement shows the normal acreage of each of the principal crops and its percentage to the normal net cropped area.

Crop.	Normal acreage.	Percentage on normal net cropped area.
Winter rice ...	218,900	25
Sugarcane ...	3,700	...
Total *aghani* crops.	222,600	26
Wheat ...	100	...
Gram ...	100	...
Other *rabi* cereals and pulses.	3,200	...
Other *rabi* food-crops.	2,900	...
Linseed .	400	...
Rape and mustard	500	.
Other oil-seeds ...	1,500	...
Tobacco	500	...
Other *rabi* non-food crops.	200	...
Total *rabi* crops	9,400	1
Forest ...	524,838	61

Crop.	Normal acreage.	Percentage on normal net cropped area.
Autumn rice ...	406,700	47
Jowār ...	700	...
Māndiā ...	600	...
Indian corn ...	2,100	...
Other *bhadoi* cereals and pulses.	114,300	13
Other *bhadoi* food-crops.	20,000	2
San (hemp) ...	1,500	...
Early cotton ...	8,000	1
Til (*bhadoi*) ..	83,200	10
Other *bhadoi* non-food crops.	2,800	...
Total *bhadoi* crops.	639,900	74
Orchards and garden produce.	1,000	...
Twice-cropped area	6,000	1

Rice is the staple crop of the district, occupying 82 and 81 per cent. respectively of the cropped area in the Bargarh and Sambalpur *khālsa* and 56 and 71 per cent. in the Bargarh and Sambalpur zamīndāris. The low proportion in the Bargarh zamīndāris is attributed to the fact that after the famine of 1900 the aboriginals substituted *kutki* (*Panicum psilopodium*), which ripens at the end of August and is not so dependent on the rainfall. This crop, however, is now again going out of fashion. In the Sambalpur zamīndāris the area under rice has also fallen off slightly, because the aboriginal races have been driven from the lower lands and now cultivate *til* or sesamum largely. **Rice.**

The cultivators state that there are over 300 varieties of seed in use, and the Settlement Officer has been able to identify 100 different kinds; but it is rare to find more than thirty in any one village. The varieties are most simply classed by the position of the fields on which they grow most successfully, viz., as *bāhāl*, *bernā*, *māl* and *āt* rices. For example, a *bāhāl* variety will fail on upper *māl* terraces, and, on the other hand, *māl* varieties will rot in the wet *bāhāl*. These main classes are further subdivided into several minor groups. Among *bāhāl* rices *jhilliparāgi* and *chināmāl* need deep, well-cultivated, well-manured, and very wet land, while *kākudibijā* and *māliyā*, a most sturdy plant, will grow well at the bottom of any depression, and are commonly sown in the newly cleared land of jungle villages. Similarly, among *bernā* rices, *baulkerā* will grow only in the lower fields of a depression, while *tamdiā* and *mugdhi* will do well on any *bernā* field. The lower terraces of *māl* land will grow some of the sturdier *bernā* varieties, but the favourite seeds are *banko* and a large family of striped or barred seeds. The uplands and the upper terraces grow coarse grains, usually black-husked. The colour distinction is said to be a good one, so far as it goes, because most of the best varieties are white-husked; the *māl* rices, which form the bulk of the crop, are reddish; and the coarse upland varieties are black. Commercially, only two classes are generally recognized, viz., the finer varieties, which can be husked readily after sun-drying, and the coarser, which have to be first parboiled or steamed and then dried. These are known as *aruā* and *usnā* rice. **Varieties of rice.**

The greater part of the rice is sown broadcast, only 4 per cent. being transplanted, though the proportion rises as high as 8 per cent. in the Bargarh plain. As in other parts of India, there are three common ways of sowing broadcast—dry sowing just before the rains break (*khardi*), sowing after the rains have broken and the ground is wet (*batri*), and sowing late with seed which has been previously germinated by soaking in water **Methods of cultivation.**

(*achharā*). The following description of the methods of cultivation is reproduced from the Settlement Report.

Ploughing. The amount of ploughing done before sowing time depends largely on the method of cultivation which is to be adopted, but it is usual to plough up all fields at least once before the rains break in June. Harvesting finishes by the end of November,* and as soon as threshing is over, the cultivator ploughs up his *bāhāl* fields to turn in the stubble. But the *māl* terraces, reaped early in October, dry up and harden very quickly, and cannot be touched, unless, as is often the case, heavy showers fall in January or February. The bulk of the work is left for the hot summer months, when heavy storms of thunder and rain usually break once a fortnight, and give the cultivator his chance to plough. It is then too that manure is spread and worked in.

Khardi. The method of sowing known as *khardi* necessitates much preliminary ploughing, and is applied chiefly to bottom lands, which retain moisture long enough after harvest to admit of effective pulverisation. It can also be used on sandy upland soils, which soak readily after summer showers. The seed is sown broadcast a fortnight before the rains break, or usually at the beginning of June. If the coming of the monsoon is delayed, and mere showers fall, the seed germinates and dies. If the monsoon is ushered in with a heavy downpour, the seed is liable to be washed out, and this is one reason why the *khardi* method cannot be employed on steep terraces. Its great advantages are that, if successful, it gives an early ripening crop, and it leaves the cultivator free for the sowing of his other land by other methods after heavy rain begins.

Batri. Of these the most popular is the *batri* method, because it is applicable to the *māl* fields, which constitute about 60 per cent. of the rice land. These bake after harvest to a brick-like hardness, and can be but lightly scratched until the monsoon has set in. They are then given a deeper ploughing and the seed is sown at once, usually in the beginning of July.

Muka. The *muka* method may be applied to any embanked field, but most suitably to the lower plots of a *bernā* dell. These have been lightly ploughed beforehand; when the rain comes in earnest, they are flooded deeply, the plough is put through water and mud, and the seed is sown on the thin slush thus worked up. After two days the water is gently drained off.

Achharā The *achharā* method is an elaboration of *muka*, which can be applied to all fields with good embankments in a low and

* Sometimes, in the case of low-lying *bāhāl* lands, it is not concluded till December.

level position. Pre-monsoon ploughing is unnecessary. On the first full fall of rain the fields are flooded, and the plough is put twice through the water and mud. Four or five days later the water is drained or scooped off, care being taken to leave no pools. The soft sediment is ploughed once more to break the remaining clods, and is then levelled with a board. Meanwhile, the seed has been germinated by being soaked in water for a day and a half, and then spread in baskets for another day. It is often put in by hand. If through carelessness any water has been left on the *achharā* field, the seed sown in this advanced condition will rot. It is necessary for success with both *muka* and *achharā* that the monsoon should be ushered in with heavy rain.

In the case of broadcast rice an important operation known *Bihurā.* as *bihurā* is necessary early in August, when the plants are about a foot high: It consists simply in running a light plough up and down the field, thus uprooting a large proportion of the plants and leaving the rest sticking loosely in the mud in all directions. The effect is to kill off weeds and aerate the soil, besides thinning the plants. It is necessary that there should be from 4 to 6 inches of water in the fields; and if there is not, the cultivator must either irrigate or wait through the long droughts that occur in this month until sufficiently heavy showers fall. The operation is calculated to hasten growth on a sandy soil and obviate the danger of a failure of the later rains. A crop thinned at an early date and then refreshed by light showers is secure; it will stand a long drought and yield a crop even if September be rainless. But if the first chance is missed and *bihurā* is not accomplished until late in August, any shortage of the September and October rain will ruin the crop.

No other operations, except weeding in August and irrigation Harvesting. in bad seasons, are necessary until the crop is ripe. Cutting begins early in September for the coarse rice of the uplands, and on the *māl* terraces it is usually finished in October. The heavier *bernā* and *bāhāl* crops are reaped in November.*

Other cereals are not of much importance with the exception Other cereals. of millets, which are a favourite crop with the aboriginal races. Of these the most largely grown are *kodo* (*Paspalum scrobiculatum*) and *kutki* (*Panicum psilopodium*), small grass-like millets grown on uplands, which taken together occupy 34,773 acres. *Kodo* is sown broadcast in the beginning of July and ripens towards the end of October and in November. *Kutki*, which is

* In the case of low-lying *bāhāl* lands harvesting sometimes does not take place till December.

known locally as *gulji*, is a crop which ripens rapidly and can be cut 60 days after it is sown. It is either sown at the breaking of the monsoon and reaped in August to get an early food supply, or is sown towards the end of August and harvested in October. The other cereals are not cultivated to any large extent. Wheat is raised on only 100 acres, but maize and *jowār* are common garden crops in the plots near homesteads. Maize of good quality is grown in Borāsāmbar, and there is a small quantity of *jowār*, which is the produce of some seed distributed five years ago in the hope that it would become popular as a fodder crop.

Pulses. Of the pulses grown in Sambalpur by far the most important are *urid*, locally called *bīrhi* (*Phaseolus radiatus*), and *mūng* (*Phaseolus Mungo*), which together account for 64,335 acres, and *kulthī* (*Dolichos biflorus*), which covers 35,395 acres. The two former are generally grown on uplands for which there is no manure to spare, while *mūng* is a common rotation crop with sugarcane. Among other pulses may be mentioned the lentil called *masūr* (*Ervum Lens*) and peas; the latter are the only second crop commonly grown, being sown in depressions before rice is cut. Generally, however, pulses are raised on inferior high-lying land which receives no manure, and consequently the outturn is, as a rule, poor.

Oil-seeds. The oil-seeds of Sambalpur include *til*, linseed, mustard and castor. Of these the most important is *til* or sesamum, locally known as *rāsī*, grown on 90,457 acres. It is sown on uplands and is commonly the first crop taken from newly broken land, where it gives a large yield, but it is also grown on very poor soils. Of late years its cultivation has decreased in the Bargarh plain, where the uplands are exhausted, but has increased greatly in other parts of the district.

Sugar-cane. Next to rice, sugarcane is perhaps the most important crop grown in the district, for though the area which it covers is small, the value of its produce is very considerable. It is grown on two classes of land:—(1) on areas permanently appropriated for the purpose, so situated as to be easily irrigated from the village tanks, in which the villagers grow their cane together; and (2) on scattered plots situated in the holdings of individual ryots and watered by lift irrigation from wells. Such fields are known locally as *barchhā*. Of late years, however, the practice of villagers growing this crop on common land has been gradually disappearing, and in most cases it is laid out in the fields by individual tenants.

Sugarcane is grown, as a rule, not on special soils, but on any plot that can be easily irrigated. The principal varieties are

banglā, or Bengal, and *tandi*. The former is a thick juicy white cane, growing 9 or 10 feet high and yielding molasses of good quality and flavour. Until recent years it was grown everywhere, but lately it has been supplanted, especially in the Bargarh plain, by *tandi*, a thin, stringy and inferior cane. Its juice is sour and its yield poor, but it is not eaten by jackals, and is cheaply grown. Among the less popular kinds of sugarcane are the Bombay and *kaliā* varieties, which are frequently grown together, the latter protecting the former from the raids of jackals.

The cane is sown in March or April, and cut in December, January and February. It is pressed in primitive mills made of three rollers, the two outer rollers being geared into the middle roller, so as to move with it, but in the opposite direction. The mill is worked by two pairs of bullocks turn and turn about, and the loss of power by friction is very great. Pressing generally takes place between sunset and sunrise; and the groaning and creaking of the rollers can be heard throughout the length and breadth of the district during the cold weather nights. The juice is for the most part boiled in earthen pots, but iron pans are used in some places.

The following sketch of the history of sugarcane cultivation in Sambalpur is quoted from Mr. Dewar's Settlement Report :— "Before the railway came, the cultivation of cane ranked second only to that of rice, which it supplemented by providing work for farm-labourers throughout the spring and hot weather. There was then little export of grain, but *gur*, being a less bulky commodity, was one of the principal articles of trade. Each village grew all its cane in common on land provided by the headman in the proximity of the principal tank. The cost and labour of fencing were shared by all, and the crop was cheaply produced. But as soon as the railway was opened, outside competition checked the trade in *gur* and at the same time doubled the profits of rice. It had been customary, even in years of comparatively short rainfall, to conserve half of the water of the principal village tank for cane irrigation in the hot months. It now became more profitable to use all the available water on the rice crop. One other cause at work was the increasing scarcity of fencing material in the open tracts. Mud walls proved an inefficient protection against jackals, and even where cultivation continued, an inferior hard cane took the place of finer varieties. In the zamīndāri villages, though these are exposed to damage by pig and bear, fencing material is abundant, and the decline of the area under good cane has been less marked. After 1899-1900 the first rush for rice profits was over, and the price of rice, much inflated by bad seasons in the

Central Provinces since 1895, became more steady. In some villages the cultivation of cane on the common land has been resumed, but in most cases the old custom has died out, and cultivators dig wells on their own holdings and work independent plots. Its expenses are heavy, but the crop provides for the consumption of the district, and in recent years the export of *gur* has recommenced on a small scale. It is not likely to develop rapidly unless there is some improvement in the present primitive methods of crushing the cane and of boiling down the juice."

Fibres. Cotton is grown on 8,000 acres, but its cultivation is very much on the decrease. The crop still pays when grown on uplands rich in vegetable silt, but in the exhausted uplands of the open tracts it has gone out. It will not grow well without manure, and all the manure available, after providing fuel, is used on the rice fields and sugarcane gardens. Consequently, its cultivation is nowhere important except in Borāsāmbar and Lakhanpur, where the lower slopes of the forest-clad hills are rich in vegetable silt. The method of sowing cotton is peculiar, the seed being sown on the ridges, between the furrows made by the plough, and pressed into the soil with the foot. After germination the field is ploughed and cross-ploughed between the rows, so as to earth up the seedlings, each group of which stands on a little mound of its own.

The only other fibre crops are *san* hemp, which is a comparatively recent innovation, and *kauriā*. The latter is sown with sugarcane and reaped in November, and sometimes also is sown by itself on *barchhā* land. It is believed to protect the sugarcane from jackals, and a little *arhar* is also sown for the same purpose. Its fibre is more valuable than that of *san* hemp, and it grows on better land. There is this further distinction that Brāhmans and Kultās will not sow *san* hemp with their own hands, because it germinates so quickly, but any one may sow *kauriā*.

The tree cotton of Sambalpur is well-known, and there is a particularly fine variety growing in the Jail garden, mainly young plants of about a year's growth. Some samples of the latter have been examined by the Reporter on Economic Products to the Government of India, who found that the bolls were the bolls of Pernambuco cotton (*Gossypium braziliense*) and that the value of the lint was very near that of Egyptian cotton. As regards its value for commercial purposes, it yields a strong staple from $1\frac{1}{8}$ to $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch long, and it possesses good spinning qualities, being said to be as good as American cotton.

Tobacco. Tobacco has of late years become an important garden crop, its area having been nearly doubled in the last 10 years.

The light sandy soil of the district is most favourable for the growth of fruit trees, of which *mahuā* (*Bassia latifolia*) is not only the most common, but also the most important. Its flowers are of great value as a food to the people generally, and especially to the aboriginals, by whom they are dried in the sun and stored throughout the year. They are also used for fattening cattle and for making spirit, while the fruit produces a thick oil used by the poorer classes for lamps, as well as for the adulteration of *ghī*. Fine mango groves are to be seen in every part of the district, while the *tāl* palm and the *khajūr*, or date palm, are common on the banks of tanks. They are cultivated for the sake of their fruit, the kernel of the former being used with rice flour for making cakes. The guava is cultivated on the banks of nullahs in many villages in the Bargarh plain, and the tamarind and jujube are fairly common. Other fruits, such as the orange, lemon, citron, plantain, pine-apple and rose-apple, grow well. Among European vegetables, cabbage, artichoke, asparagus, celery, beet-root, peas, mint, radishes and turnips can be grown successfully. Other garden crops include melons, water-melons, and various condiments and spices, such as chillies, coriander, etc. FRUIT AND VEGETABLES.

Enquiries made in the course of the recent settlement shew that though the famine of 1900 seriously checked agricultural progress in the western tracts, yet in 15 years the area occupied for cultivation increased by 16 per cent., the cropped area by 6 or 7 per cent., the area under rice alone by 7 per cent., and the irrigable area in the *khālsa* by no less than 54 per cent. The largest increase in the cultivated area has occurred in the zamīndāris, where extensive areas of cultivable waste land were available; but there has also been a marked progress in recent years in the Sambalpur *tahsīl* owing to the introduction of the railway and its immunity from crop failure in 1899. The extension has been least in the Bargarh plain, where the land has long been under close tillage and other influences have also been at work to prevent further advance. Between 1880 and 1892 large areas of upland in the open plain, left bare by the deforestation that ensued on close cultivation, were cultivated with cotton, pulses, and oil-seeds. But lack of natural vegetation speedily exhausted the shallow soil, and when a sharp rise in the price of rice followed the opening of the railway, the tendency to concentrate upon rice land and to neglect the uplands grew strong and was confirmed by the short rainfall of 1899. On the other hand, the land that is now in regular cultivation is much more closely worked than in past years. All the rice land is cropped annually, and the best uplands are cropped at least every second year. EXTENSION AND IMPROVEMENT OF CULTIVATION.

This change is partly due to natural causes, but has been hastened by the advent of railway communication. It no longer pays the cultivator to distribute his capital and labour over both rice and miscellaneous crops. Formerly he grew as chance-crops the oil-seeds, pulses, and cotton needed in his own household. But with rice cultivation paying over 100 per cent. on his outlay, he concentrates upon that and buys his other necessaries more cheaply than he can grow them. The only exception to the rule that new fallows have decreased is in some of the eastern zamīndāris, where forest land close to the railway has been opened up. These tracts are peopled chiefly by aboriginals, whose tendency is to clear new land frequently rather than to develop the fields already reclaimed from jungle.

As regards the prospects of future extension of cultivation, it is estimated that about 60 square miles of tree forest and 603 square miles of scrub-jungle are available for agricultural extension, but much of the latter is practically uncultivable. That the present rapid subjugation of waste land in the Sambalpur *tahsīl* will continue for several years seems certain, but to the west of the Mahānadi there is not much more land to occupy except in the Borāsāmbar zamīndāri. The present tendency of cultivators being to concentrate upon the low lands growing rice and sugarcane, it is improbable that the sandy and gravelly uplands will be re-occupied until a hardy crop is introduced, which will grow with little or no manure on poor soil, and which will not require much ploughing.

It may be added that the famine of 1900 taught two lessons, viz., the need of extending irrigation tanks and of adopting a system of closer cultivation. There was scarcely a single *gaontiā* in the famine-stricken tracts who did not double his desire for an irrigation tank and do his best to obtain it :—indeed, the *gaontiā* who handled the money valued earth-work more than silver. The shortness of the grain supply, again, made the cultivators adopt a system of closer cultivation. They abandoned, for the time being, light and comparatively useless land, which they had been in the habit of scratching, and devoted their attention to the proper embanking of the better fields. They had no seed to waste, and consequently they were willing to abandon the wasteful system of broadcasting and *biharā*, and transplanted their rice wherever they could.

Agricultural Association.

A District Agricultural Association has been in existence since 1903. Its members have made useful experiments with potatoes and ground-nuts, and there is some hope that these crops will become popular, as well as jute, which is being introduced in

Borāsāmbar for the first time by the zamīndār with the help of a trained cultivator from Cuttack. Experiments have also been made with wheat and cotton.

The cattle of the district are miserably poor and of small size; CATTLE. but fortunately heavy cattle are not required for the plough owing to the light sandy soil. For draught purposes larger animals are imported from Berār. The poverty of the cattle is due to the carelessness of the people about breeding and also to the want of nourishing food. For the greater part of the year the cattle are given no food by their owners; they are turned out each morning in charge of the village herdsman to pick up what they can, and it is only in the hot weather months that some rice straw is thrown before them when they return at nightfall. During the rainy season and cold weather they lie without food or litter all night. No fodder crop is grown, ensilage is unknown, and after the month of November the grazing grounds of the open tracts yield the minimum of fodder.

Buffaloes are largely used for cultivation, and frequently also for draught and for pressing oil and sugarcane. They are not bred locally to any great extent, but imported from the northern districts through Bilāspur and Sirguja. Those reared in the district are distinctly inferior in quality. Ponies are kept by the well-to-do for riding, but are scarce. Goats and sheep in small quantities are kept by the lower castes for food only, no use being made of the sheep's wool. Bhuktā near Ambābhonā is the largest cattle market in the district, and after it rank those of Bargarh and Talpatiā. A veterinary dispensary was opened at Sambalpur in June 1906. The most common disease is rinderpest, which in 1906-07 caused 1,339 deaths. Cattle are exhibited annually at the Agricultural Show held formerly at Hūmā and now at Sambalpur.

CHAPTER VII.

NATURAL CALAMITIES.

FORMER IMMUNITY FROM FAMINE.

UNTIL the year 1900 Sambalpur was regarded as practically immune from famine, so much so that it was described in official reports as a "Garden of Eden" and a "Land of Promise." But, in spite of former plenty, failures of the crops are known to have occurred from time to time involving some distress and scarcity, at least in parts of the district. Early records show that there was such a failure in 1834, when, in spite of the prohibition of export, the price of rice rose as high as 8 to 10 seers per rupee. There was again scarcity in 1845, but after the latter year the price of rice remained steady at 54 seers per rupee. Subsequently, owing to unfavourable and deficient rainfall, it rose to the then abnormal figure of 16 seers per rupee both in 1865-66, the year of the great Orissa famine, and in 1877-78, when some scarcity followed a meagre harvest. In 1886 there was again a failure of the rice crop in some parts, prices rising to 19 seers to the rupee; and relief works were opened, but failed to attract labour. Through all these years, however, there was no general famine, though there must have been severe distress in the more remote and more jungly, less closely cultivated and less densely populated parts of the district.

FAMINE OF 1897.

Even in 1897, when other parts of the country suffered from one of the worst famines of the 19th century, Sambalpur was scarcely affected. The outturn of the rice crop was fair, being 70 per cent. of an average crop, and good prices were obtained. Famine was declared only in a small area of 228 square miles with a population of 62,000, comprised in the Chandarpur and Mālkharodā zamīndāris, which have since been transferred to the Central Provinces. In this area famine relief measures had to be undertaken; and in Borāsāmbar, where there had been a partial failure of the crops owing to the premature cessation of the monsoon, some relief work on roads was started by the estate. Elsewhere it was found sufficient to provide some work on tanks with the help of loans and private subscriptions. How little the district was affected by this famine may be realized from

Mr. Craddock's *Report on the Famine in the Central Provinces in 1896 and 1897*. "In Sambalpur, with a very fair rice crop, large exports and high prices, money poured into the district, and private charity amply sufficed to support the poor whom the high prices affected. A single road work was opened in April and continued till October, but this was chiefly intended to meet the needs of a corner of the district where the local crops had been poor and immigrants from Bilāspur were numerous. The numbers on this work only reached 2,200, and rapidly fell as the rains advanced." A further proof, if any is required, of the lightnsss of the famine is afforded by the fact that "a great many people from Bilāspur wandered over into Sambalpur, the land of plenty."

The first real famine, and hitherto the only famine, of Sambalpur was that of 1900,* which showed in a striking manner the dependence of the people on the rice crop and the danger of a premature cessation of the monsoon. In Borāsāmbar alone is there any considerable area under millets, and though the pulses called *mūng* and *kulthī* are grown all over the district, the area given up to them is comparatively insignificant. There is practically no *rabi* crop, and everything consequently depends on the rice. This failed in 1899-1900 owing to a badly distributed rainfall, and the district was involved in famine in spite of previous years of plenty. The outturn of the rice crop in 1895-96, *i.e.*, of the crop harvested at the end of 1895, had been 70 per cent., and in the preceding three years it had been 88 per cent. In 1896-97 there was a bumper crop, the average outturn being 120 per cent., but for other food-grains, viz., pulse, *til* and sugarcane, the outturn was 45, 45 and 60 per cent., respectively. In 1897-98 the harvest was almost as good, the outturn of rice being 101 per cent., while there were full crops of *til*, etc.; and in 1898-99 rice had an outturn of 105 per cent. and the other crops were also good. Preceding circumstances could not well be more fortunate, except perhaps in the Borāsāmbar zamīndāri, where, however, the outturn was little short of a full crop. FAMINE OF 1900.

On the whole, the rainfall of 1898 was sufficient, seasonable, and favourable to agriculture, and the earlier part of the monsoon of 1899 was well up to strength. The rains broke in the third week of June 1899 and continued with fair steadiness till the middle of August, the total rainfall up to the 19th August being 38·72 inches at Sambalpur and 30·93 inches at Bargarh.

* This account of the famine of 1900 has been compiled from the Deputy Commissioner's Final Famine Report.

After this, the monsoon current fell off in strength, yielding only light and unsatisfactory showers; but up to the end of the month there was no apprehension of famine, for some of the crops on the lighter *āt* land had been reaped, and the prospects for the heavier lands were good. Indeed, it was reported at this time that there was no reason to suppose that any relief would be necessary. From the beginning of September, however, it became evident that unless there was heavy rain, the crops would suffer and distress ensue. These gloomy anticipations were fulfilled. In the first half of September there was a fall of 1·23 inches at Sambalpur and of 1·91 inches at Bargarh, and then the rain ceased altogether, giving a total of 45·51 inches in Sambalpur and 37·78 inches in Bargarh. This was not very much below the average for the Sambalpur *tahsīl*, which consequently suffered least. In fact, had the earlier rain been more evenly distributed the loss of crops would have been slight; and as it was, tanks were filled early, and where they existed, they saved the crops on the heavy lands in October. The villages in the east and north of the Bargarh plain also were not so seriously affected, getting, as in the Sambalpur *tahsīl*, half an average crop, but distress was very severe in the south-west, especially in Borāsāmbar. In the district, as a whole, there was a serious failure of the rice crop, the outturn of which was only 30 per cent. for transplanted and 45 per cent. for broadcast rice, while in Bijepur and Borāsāmbar it was almost an entire failure.

On the 22nd September the first step towards the organization of relief was taken, *patwāris* throughout the district being ordered to get village relief lists in readiness. It was not anticipated, however, that there would be a complete failure of crops in any tract, and it was therefore assumed that the labour required for the harvest would tide the labouring classes over October and November, so that actual relief operations would not begin until the month of December. This forecast proved to be practically correct, as will be apparent from the following table showing the progress of relief measures throughout the year. Briefly, there were five fairly distinct periods:—(1) November and December, when distress was being tested. (2) The general extension of relief with works and kitchens, which lasted till March, when cholera caused much disorganization, and when there was also a lightening of distress owing to the incoming of the *mahuā* harvest. (3) The hot weather period, when, by means of small village works and extended kitchens, relief was effectively organized in the face of cholera. (4) The fourth period showed a contraction of relief on works and a great extension of kitchen

relief. (5) The fifth was the period of contraction lasting from the middle of August till the end of October, when the district was practically in the same position as in December 1899.

MONTH.	No. of kitchens open.	No. relieved in kitchens.	No. of works open.	No. relieved on works.	Total no. relieved, including village relief.	Percentage of population of famine tracts on relief.	Population.
November 1899 ...	7	500	3	1,000	1,500	0·4	
December " ...	44	13,000	5	2,000	15,000	4·3	
January 1900 ...	73	20,000	10	7,500	27,500	7·8	350,000
February " ...	82	20,000	10	9,000	29,000	8·3	
March " ...	85	14,500	21	7,000	22,000	6·3	
April " ...	96	17,000	32	15,000	34,000	8·7	
May " ...	102	19,000	32	18,000	39,000	10·0	390,000
June " ...	133	34,000	18	13,000	49,000	12·5	
July " ...	163	61,000	8	13,000	77,000	19·7	
August " ...	231	84,000	4	5,500	93,000	21·6	430,000
September " ...	156	33,000	...	...	36,000	8·4	
October " ...	73	14,000	...	...	15,000	4·3	550,000
Average ...	104	27,500	12	7,500	36,500	9·7	380,000

As stated above, the district was scarcely affected by the famine of 1896-97; but in that year and in the preceding year, owing to the scarcity in other districts and consequent high prices, all the available balance of grain stocks was exported, and the year 1897-98 was started with a much lower reserve than usual. But the crops of that year and of 1898-99 were excellent, and it is estimated that in September 1899 there was more than sufficient for a year's supply. In Borāsāmbar, however, the food stocks in the hands of *gaontiās* and ryots were very small after the beginning of 1900. Little grain was sold at the local markets, and in some tracts the labourers and smaller tenants depended upon supplies brought in by Cutchī *mahājans*. In Bijepur the majority of the *gaontiās* and many tenants had good stocks, but, being surrounded by a large population of Gāndās, they were in constant terror of being robbed, and hid their stocks carefully. It was not till the end of August, when crop prospects were assured, that they brought them out for sale. In the rest of the district, stocks in the hands of the cultivators were probably adequate, and those in the hands of the richer men were large. Stocks.

Regarding the course of prices, the Deputy Commissioner wrote as follows in his final report on the famine:—"Sambalpur has been accustomed to have its staple food very cheap.

The normal rate of rice in Sambalpur is about 17 seers, but at Bargarh it is 20 seers, falling at harvest time so low as 22 and 24 seers; and in other less central parts of the district the prices are of course still lower. Small broken rice, cleaned off from the finer qualities, is to be had at 30 seers, and it is on this that many of the lowest class habitually live. It is then the less surprising that distress should have been acute in a formerly prosperous district, which even yet had large grain stocks locked up in the hands of its well-to-do residents, when prices ranged in out-of-the-way tracts from the normal 24 seers to 6 seers and even to 5 seers per rupee. In contrast with the ordinary usage, the more remote parts, where rice is usually cheapest, had the highest prices. They were farther from the stocks. Locally, *gaontiās* and ryots who possessed stocks would not sell. Many could have parted with half their hoard quite safely and at a very high price. That they did not do so is due to two facts. They were afraid, by open selling, of drawing attention to the fact that they possessed stocks which could be looted. And again, so panic-stricken were the people by the failure of the 1899 crops, a disaster for which they had no precedent, that they kept in store all that they could in view of a second possible failure. So strong was the belief that the crop of 1900 would also be a failure that it was in some tracts difficult to get tenants to take *takāvi* loans for seed grain. They said that it would be lost and themselves burdened with the debt.

"Borāsāmbar was the most remote tract and therefore, in an ordinary year, the place of cheapest rice. This year (1900) in January, when in Sambalpur and Bargarh the price was 11 seers, it was 9½ seers in Borāsāmbar. By the end of February prices had risen there to 8½ seers, when in other parts they were 10 and 11 seers. By June when 10 seers was ruling in Sambalpur, and 9½ seers at Bargarh, the Borāsāmbar price rose to 7½, and again to 6½ seers, which rate ruled steadily throughout July and August. From January to August 1900 the average prices were 9 seers in Sambalpur town, Bargarh and Bijepur, and 7½ seers in Borāsāmbar. There was in all parts a gradual rise up to the month of August, and prices seem to have risen much higher than in either Raipur or Bilāspur, where 9 seers was considered a high rate.

"It was not until the end of August that the tension was relieved. By that time it was clear that the chances were in favour of a good harvest. Prices fell at headquarters from 8¾ to 11½ seers and at Bargarh from 8½ to 9½ seers. In Borāsāmbar, owing to the harvesting of an early millet, prices fell at the same

date from 6 to 8 seers. Afterthat there was some hesitation at Sambalpur itself, but in the district the fall was steady. At Bargarh prices went from $9\frac{1}{2}$ to 11 seers, from 11 to 13 seers. By the middle of October when harvesting had generally well begun, prices fell nearly to the normal, which, by the end of October, they attained.

"The course of prices seriously affected at sowing time even such cultivators as were not in need of relief. Ordinarily about Bargarh *dhān* seed grain sells at 2 *khandis* (40 *tāmbis* or 50 seers) per rupee. This year in Borāsāmbar and Bijepur its price was 15 *tāmbis* (about 18 seers). Large numbers of Borāsāmbar tenants, getting their *takāvi* early, went into the Bargarh *khālsa* and bought their seed grain there. Nothing could better prove the depletion of food stocks in Borāsāmbar. By December a harvest had been got in, which probably represented at least 3,000,000 maunds of rice, but in the famine tracts the crop was little more than sufficient to furnish seed grain for the next sowing. The stocks which did exist, however, were held back, both by *gaontiās*, ryots and dealers, by the former two classes in view of what they considered a probable second failure of crops, and by the latter, partly for the same reason, and partly to be sure of getting the highest possible price for their grain."

Relief on works was mainly afforded not in the camps of the Public Works Department, which were never largely attended, but by works of considerable size managed by civil agency on the intermediate system, and by small village works managed by piece-work through the agency of *gaontiās*. This policy was rendered the more necessary by the continual presence of cholera for four months; but in any case it was found to be difficult or impossible to tempt the people, especially the aboriginals of Borāsāmbar, to any distance from their homes in order to obtain relief on large works. They were not educated in famine operations, and people in need of relief and capable of working were most reluctant to come to the works. Gradually, they gained confidence, but in March and April the extension of relief works was rendered most difficult by continual outbreaks of cholera and wholesale stampedes. These panics were frequently repeated throughout the year, though on a smaller scale and for much less cause. The result was that the aboriginals greatly preferred labour on *mālguzāri* works near their homes, although they got much lower wages and did much more work—double the work, indeed, for those wages. But they were more familiar with the small tank-works run on their accustomed system of piece-work. In Bijepur again, the Gāndās, who were most in need of relief,

Relief Works.

either thieved rather than take to honest work, or proceeded to qualify themselves for kitchen relief by remaining idle and in want of food until they were emaciated. Even when they came to the works, their outturn was conspicuously low and their manifold complaints conspicuously loud. The total number of units relieved by civil agency and *mālguzāri* works was 1,899,657 and by Public Works Department works 601,485.

Kitchens. A reference to the previous table will shew the rate at which kitchens were opened. The food given was cooked rice and *dāl*, according to the prescribed scale of rations, but some deviations from rule were found to be necessary. The people on relief were accustomed to the plainest possible fare, and though even the moderate allowance of *dāl* that was served out was a luxury to them, it was not fully appreciated at first. They would not eat kedgeree (*khichrī*), or rice and *dāl* cooked together, for it was to them an unaccustomed dish. From the start rice (*bhāt*) had to be cooked separately, and this they ate first, reserving the *dāl* pottage as a tit-bit to be sucked up slowly afterwards. Even plain *bhāt* was objected to in the hot weather, because the people were accustomed to a dish called *pakhāl*, *i.e.*, rice which has been parboiled and then steeped in a large quantity of cold water. So in the hot weather a half ration of *bhāt*, with the allowance of *dāl*, was served hot in the early morning, and in the evening the remaining half ration was given cold in the form of *pakhāl*.

There was a great deal of difficulty at first in inducing people, especially aboriginals, to accept cooked food. They were afraid to take help which, they imagined, would have to be paid for later in some way; and they were afraid of losing caste. This objection was gradually overcome. Care was taken to appoint as cooks only Brāhmans of the highest of the three Oriyā classes, and as watermen only Gauras. This met most objections, but the Binjhāls at first insisted that they could not eat from the hands of any Brāhman. They were then given a cook of their own caste, but later this was admitted to be unnecessary. The highest attendance at kitchens was 84,000 on the 18th of August. Altogether 9,780,291 units were relieved at a cost of Rs. 4,00,923-6-2 in food alone.

Mortality. The mortality during the famine was exceptionally high, 74,107 deaths being recorded from 1st October 1899 to 30th September 1900, *i.e.*, a death-rate of 93 per mille per annum on the last census population of 796,000. But there is some doubt about the figures, for the weekly returns shewed only 62,924 deaths, *i.e.*, a death-rate of 79 per mille. A severe epidemic of cholera and small-pox accounted for 10,810 and 1,398 deaths

respectively; and excluding the latter, the rate is either 70·7 or 63·7 per mille. Even this, however, is unduly high, and the causes of the apparent divergence from a normal death-rate appear to be as follows Firstly, the census figure of 796,000, as taken in 1891, did not represent the population of the district at the time of the famine, for there was a large increase due to immigration, which was greatest in the zamīndāris constituting the famine tracts. The second cause lay in the migration of wanderers, among whom mortality was very high. They had come long distances and were almost always in a most reduced state, some being mere skeletons. They had no houses to go, little or no shelter was available, and they were exposed to unusually wet and chilly weather. The third cause may be found in the unusual unhealthiness of climatic conditions. The rainfall was a record one, and it came in bursts, so that the weather alternated between extreme heat and considerable cold. A form of recurrent fever consequently broke out in what was practically epidemic form, accounting for 19,976 deaths out of the total of 74,107, *i.e.*, 27 per cent. It was no respecter of persons; all officials suffered from it, and this seriously hampered relief work in August and September.

Attitude of the people.

It was difficult, in the face of long previous prosperity, to believe that distress in Sambalpur would be real. It was real, and the explanation is that the appearance of prosperity is somewhat deceptive, for it is confined to certain rich parts of the district and to the higher classes. The standard of comfort moreover is low, a large proportion of the population consisting of aboriginals, and aboriginals do not save. Distress was consequently acute, and one striking illustration of its reality is that the merchants bought up at low prices thousands of brass *lotās* and *ginās*, two cart-loads of which were at one time being ferried over the Mahānadī to Sambalpur daily. Another illustration will be found in the figures of export and import, for Sambalpur exported foolishly, and had to re-import inferior rice in equal quantities later in the year.

When famine did come, the former immunity was a hindrance to relief, the cheapness and profusion of former years having unfitted the people to contend with scarcity. On the one hand, the village officials and those that were too well-to-do to be seriously affected gave no help to relief operations: indeed, a stubborn opposition was frequently raised by those who ought to have helped, and who probably would have helped if they had had previous experience of famine. On the other hand, the poorer classes who needed relief were uneducated in famine programmes, and

had to be encouraged and instructed before they were able or willing to accept the relief open to them. This was especially the case in Bijepur and Borāsāmbar. In the former charge the lower classes consist largely of Gāndās, and the Gāndā is by nature and habit a thief, and, failing that, a beggar. They were willing enough to avail themselves of the kitchens both for themselves and for their children, but they would not, if it could be avoided, attend a relief work. Their prejudices are against work, and when turned out of kitchens as able-bodied, they took to thieving.

In Borāsāmbar the majority of the people were aboriginals, Binjhāls, Gonds and Khonds, and the difficulty of dealing effectively with them may be gathered from the previous account. In spite of the discomfort of the rains, the heavy tasks and rigorous fines, large numbers preferred relief on works to the alternative of gratuitous relief of any kind and, in particular, of kitchen relief. The Binjhāls were especially reluctant to come to the kitchens at the beginning of relief operations, chiefly because they were convinced that they would either be deported to Assam or somehow made to pay for the relief later by service being exacted from them.

In the case of village *chaukīdārs*, the giving of village relief was understood, for they were Government servants. But with the rest of the people there was always an uncomfortable impression, which could not be eradicated, that the acceptance of money-doles would pledge them to some kind of future service. Generally speaking, the attitude of the people towards relief measures was one of extreme shyness, except among the Bijepur Gāndās, who were shy of work only.

General conditions. In conclusion, the following remarks of the Settlement Officer, Mr. Dewar, may be quoted as showing the economic revolution due to the introduction of the railway and the way in which it affected the people during this famine. After explaining that formerly the district was a landlocked home of cheapness, and that rice stayed in the district because it could not get out, he writes :—"Circumstances were altered by the completion of the main Bengal-Nāgpur Railway line in 1890 and of the branch line to Sambalpur in 1894. The price of rice at once began to rise towards its level in outside districts. For many years the opening of the country brought with it nothing but progress and increased prosperity. There were fair or good harvests, the small cultivator stored grain or sold it at high rates, the labourer found work and was paid in grain. The large landowners and tenants made big profits and were able to build tanks, extend their cultivation, and still save.

"But it was another matter when in 1899 the rice crop failed over all the western and south-western part of the district. The smaller cultivators had lost all their crop even in villages where the richer men, using the irrigation tanks, saved half a harvest The small cultivator soon had to buy. The farm-hand thrown out of employment, the day-labourer and the artisan, had to buy. But a price of 16 seers, formerly considered a scarcity price, had now become the normal rate, and, when that rose to 12 or 10 seers, famine conditions were well established. Meanwhile, the richer men, attracted by the previously unequalled price, had sold for export much too early, and most of the surplus grain had left the district. Later, even in the stricken tracts, there were still large stocks, but the *gaontiās* and tenants who held them, conscious of their first mistake and remembering also that in the past bad seasons had run in pairs, held back and lost their second opportunity.

"The climax was reached in August 1900, when no faith could be put in the coming harvest, because weather conditions seemed to threaten a second failure. Matters were at their worst in the remote western zamīndāris. Here, only fifteen years before, a normal price after an ordinary harvest had been 70 to 80 seers. It went to 6 seers in August 1900. Rice had been rushed out on the railway in October, November, December and January. Ton for ton an exactly equal amount had from April to August to be railed and carted back, inferior grain at a doubled price. The financial loss fell upon the labouring classes, on the small cultivators, who were chiefly aboriginals, and on Government. The rich cultivators missed most of the profit which they might have made had they understood the new conditions that the railway had brought with it. The only gainers were a dozen traders, the railway company, and the agents who exported labour to Assam.

"One most noteworthy feature of famine work in the later months was the difficulty of redistributing grain throughout the district to tracts where local supplies were exhausted or were being held back. To drain the rice out of the district had been easy. It had been brought to trading centres in head-loads over village paths. It could not be redistributed in the same way, partly because private trade was paralysed, and partly because the people who carried it were, when it came back, in famine-kitchens or on works. Even had they been available, they could not have bought it, and they could no longer have been trusted as hired carriers. It had to be carted over a district which had but few cart roads. After the rains broke in June, even the main road to Raipur was

frequently blocked by recurrent floods and the village tracks were impassable. The best of rice does not travel well in rainy weather on open carts, and much of the reimported grain fermented and became unfit for consumption.

"That short rainfalls will again occur and produce crop failures in at least the western half of the district is quite certain. It may be confidently hoped that, in future, the richer agriculturists will understand better the altered range of prices, and will benefit both themselves and the district by holding back stocks for local sale. It is also to be hoped that there will not again be a large influx of starving wanderers from the States and from other British districts But in any case road-improvement is a necessity, and it would be advisable also to extend the railway so that it will be able to feed the district as well as to drain it."

CHAPTER VIII.

RENTS, WAGES AND PRICES.

ECONOMIC rents are practically non-existent in Sambalpur, the rents of all classes of tenants except sub-tenants being fixed by the Settlement Officer at the periodical revision of the land revenue. They are not competitive rents, and they represent a minute fraction of the actual produce. **Rents in *Khālsa*.**

The first regular settlement was carried out in 1876, but the assessments were based on areas estimated according to the amount of seed stated to be sown, and the results were consequently nothing more than a mere approximation. This settlement was made* for 12 years. On its expiry, the whole of the *khālsa* area (*i.e.*, land not belonging to Feudatory States or included in feudal zamīndāris) was cadastrally surveyed and the reassessment of land revenue conducted on ryotwāri principles, as the tenants all enjoyed the occupancy status and the law necessitated the fixation of rents in detail. This was a work of some magnitude and of no small difficulty carried out between 1885 and 1889. Nearly six million fields had to be surveyed, and the task of enhancing rents was complicated by the absence of any reliable statistics shewing the increase in cultivation which had taken place since the last settlement. Prices stood very much as they did 20 years before, and the grounds on which enhancement was effected were the extreme lowness and inequality of the ryotī payments, the incidence of which ranged in different groups from annas 9-2 to annas 1-2 per cultivated acre. The all-round rate for the district was as low as annas 3-8 per acre and represented only 3 to 4 per cent. of the average value of the produce. The operations, therefore, consisted in raising the payments of villages where the rate was inadequate, to that already attained in areas of similar character. The opportunity was also taken to level up the payments of individual cultivators, where they were inadequate owing to the extension of holdings by the absorption of new land or for other reasons. The net result was that the ryot's payments were enhanced by 35 per cent., but the rate per acre for the whole district did not exceed annas 5-5, and in only two groups, containing the richest land in the district, did the rent-rate fixed exceed 8 annas. **Settlements of rents.**

Owing to the low pitch of the rents imposed, the settlement of 1885-89 was sanctioned for only 14 years, expiring in 1902-03. During its currency the district passed through what may almost be described as an economic revolution, mainly owing to the introduction of the railway. In spite of the check caused by the famine of 1900, the area occupied for cultivation increased by 16 per cent. and the cropped area by 7 per cent. The price of agricultural produce is estimated to have risen by 100 per cent., while the market value of agricultural land was more than doubled. These circumstances justified a large enhancement of rents, but it was not known till settlement operations were in progress how greatly conditions had altered; and the losses caused by the famine led Government to direct that an increase of only 30 per cent. should be aimed at.

The resettlement resulted in an enhancement of 31 per cent. for the whole *khālsa* area, the rents of the Sambalpur *tahsīl* being raised by 32 per cent. and those of Bargarh by 29 per cent.* It was found that the average rate of rent imposed at the settlement of 1885-89 had fallen from annas 5-5 to annas 4-10 per acre, owing to the addition of new unrented land. By the revision it was increased to annas 6-4 for the whole area, the average being annas 6-7 in the Sambalpur *tahsīl* and annas 6-1 in the Bargarh *tahsīl*. The lowest rates imposed over all the groups of villages were annas 2-9 in Lakhanpur, which is a remote tract of hills and forests, and 4 annas in Kurkutta, another remote group, which was severely affected in the famine of 1900. The highest rates were annas 8-5 and annas 8-3, respectively, in Remendā and Tāmparsarā, the richest and more closely cultivated parts of the Bargarh *tahsīl*, and annas 10-5 and annas 7-8, respectively, in the Sambalpur and Talab groups, which most closely adjoin the headquarters town and the railway terminus. How light the average rental is may be realized from the fact that it does not amount to 5 per cent. of the net profits of cultivation.

The marginal table shews the average rent rates imposed for each class of soil at this settlement.

		Rs.	As.	P.
Bāhāl	...	1	1	4
Bernā	...	0	11	4
Māl	...	0	6	3
At	...	0	1	4
Barchhā	...	1	8	4
Bāri	...	0	13	6

The meanings of the terms used have been explained in Chapter VI, but for facility of reference it may be mentioned that, speaking broadly, *bāhāl* is flat land lying along a depression, *bernā* is land at

* The revised revenue of the *khālsa* and eight zamīndāris was collected from 1905-06, and of the remaining zamīndāris from 1906-07.

the bottom of a slope, and *māl* is land higher up the slope. *At* is high-lying land on a watershed, *barchhā* is a term used for sugarcane fields, and *bāri* denotes vegetable gardens. At the last settlement the first three kinds of soil, which comprise the rice lands, were subdivided into 22 different classes, *āt* and *barchhā* land into 2 classes each, and *bāri* land into 4 classes. *Bāhāl* soil and *bernā* soil were subdivided into two groups, viz., *bāhāl* I and *bāhāl* II, *bernā* I and *bernā* II; and each of these was further classified under four heads, viz., (1) *khari-pāni*, (2) *khari*, (3) *pāni*, and (4) ordinary. *Mālsamān* land was classified under the same four heads, and so was *bāri* land; while *āt* land and *barchhā* land were each subdivided into two classes, *khari* and ordinary.

The system of assessment of rents in Sambalpur is entirely different to that followed in other parts of Bengal. This system, which was introduced at the settlement of 1885-89, and has been adopted *mutatis mutandis* in other settlements in the Central Provinces, is described in detail in the settlement reports, but briefly its main features are as follows. Its chief principle is that the rental of the previous settlement being taken as a standard, enhancements are based on the increase in the prices of produce or extension of cultivation according to a general rate previously determined. The settlement is preceded by an accurate cadastral survey and a detailed record for each field in the village of tenures, rent and character of cultivation. Besides this, a list is drawn up for every field showing its position according to the irrigation or drainage it receives and according to its productive capacity. The comparative value of the various soils having been ascertained, the result is recorded in terms of a common unit known as the 'soil-unit.' The incidence of the existing rent on this unit in each village is then checked by a comparison with the incidence in other villages and by an examination of past enhancements and the rise of prices; and on these considerations is based a standard unit for each group of villages.

System of assessment.

The unit is then modified for each village according to local circumstances; and when the village unit is applied to the various soil areas contained in each holding of the village, the result represents, for each holding and for the aggregate of holdings, the standard rental which can fairly be demanded. This is modified, where necessary, in each holding with reference to the present rent and any other special circumstances; but the rent already paid for a holding is not lowered at the time of revision merely because it is in excess of the deduced rent. The system, which is known as the "soil-unit system," involves detailed enquiries in the field to ascertain the relative productiveness of different classes of

land; and in order to arrive at a correct valuation, it is the practice in Sambalpur to make careful calculations of their net profits.

Produce rents.

The custom of paying rents in kind is of no importance in Sambalpur, as the policy of Government has always been to commute all such rents into cash. Produce rents are, however, paid by sub-tenants under what is known as the *bhāgel* system, under which half the gross produce is handed over to the lessor. Usually the lessor provides half the seed required for cultivation and pays the full rent of the holding, while the lessee uses his own bullocks and bears the cost of cultivation. When the crop is reaped, the gross produce is divided in equal shares.

RENTS IN ZAMINDARIS.

At the settlement of 1885-89, a survey and land valuation were carried out only in the Chandarpur-Padampur *tā uks* and the Mālkharodā *jāgir*, which have now been transferred to the Central Provinces. In the zamīndāris no regular settlement of tenants' rents was undertaken, but the rents actually paid for the land under cultivation were accurately ascertained, and in most cases where produce rents existed, they were commuted into cash rents. At the settlement recently concluded the rents were fully revised in three different ways. (1) In the case of the zamīndāris in the Bargarh plain, viz., Barpāli, Bijepur, Ghes, Bheran, Kharsal, Pahārsirgirā, Mandomahāl and Pātkulandā, the *khālsa* system of land valuation and assessment was applied, as these estates lie in or close to the open plain and are almost as closely cultivated as the neighbouring *khālsa* tracts. The result was to raise the rent rate from 3 annas 10 pies to 5 annas per acre. (2 and 3) In the Borāsāmbar estate two different methods of assessment were adopted. In the eastern portion lying in the Ang valley, which is well cultivated, a method of assessment based on a simple scale of classes and values was employed. In the more backward and remote villages a summary settlement was made. It was decided that no elaborate classification of the land of tenants should be undertaken, that existing rents for old land should be accurately ascertained but not enhanced, and that only on land newly broken since the completion of the survey should new rents be imposed, calculated at the average acre rate already being paid in each village. The result was an average assessment of only 2 annas per acre for the tenancy area.

In the seven zamīndāris of the Sambalpur *tahsīl*, viz., Kolābirā, Rāmpur, Rājpur, Kodābagā, Machidā, Lairā and Loisingh, the method of assessment followed in the open part of Borāsāmbar was adopted, and the produce rents in vogue were commuted, the average rent rate per acre imposed being only annas 3-9 per acre.

Wages, whether for skilled or for unskilled labour, are still mostly paid in kind. The village blacksmith is paid a *tāmbi** of rice for mending a plough-share or preparing a sickle, and the same quantity of paddy for sharpening four plough-shares. The washerman is given a *khandi** of paddy in the case of each adult and 10 *tāmbis* for each boy or girl as his yearly wage, besides food on the days when he is given clothes to wash, and special fees on births, deaths and marriages. The barber is similarly remunerated in kind, getting one *khandi* of paddy per annum for a man and 10 *tāmbis* for an unmarried boy. In some cases, however, these village servants hold service lands. Carpenters are very few in number, the ryots usually doing their own rough wood-work themselves or getting it done by their farm labourers. Even in the town of Sambalpur there are not more than a dozen carpenters: and they have little skill or training. Unskilled labour is, as a rule, and field labour invariably, paid in kind, the wages being so many of the small *tāmbis* equivalent to 15 chittacks. WAGES.

Owing to the rise of the price of rice, the wages of an ordinary day-labourer have risen from 2 annas to $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas a day; and in 1908, owing to the further rise in the price of food-grains, the wages of adult labourers increased to 3 annas per diem. Professional diggers receive $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas a day, which is also the daily wage paid to road coolies working in the town of Sambalpur and its vicinity. The Kurās, however, seldom work as coolies paid by the day, but generally undertake earthwork on contract at the rate of 420 to 480 cubic feet per rupee. Formerly, when food-grains were cheap, they used to be paid in grain, receiving a *khandi* of paddy (calculated on the scale of *bhuti tāmbis*) instead of a rupee in cash. Now, the price of grain has risen so much, that it would scarcely pay the owner of the land to give wages in paddy for earth-work.

Agricultural labourers are of two kinds, the *bhutiār* or day-labourer and the *guti* or farm servant. The *bhutiār* is paid at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ *tāmbis* for an ordinary spell (*bel*) of labour, but 2 *tāmbis* for a spell of harvest labour and 5 *tāmbis* overtime wage for a night's threshing. The *bel* is a half day's spell during the ploughing season, for the condition of the plough-cattle is so poor, that they cannot be worked, at least in the hot weather, for more than five hours at a time. Consequently, the ploughman

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* A *khandi* is equal to 20 *tāmbis*, of which there are two kinds, (1) the *bhuti* and (2) the *lakshmīprashād*. A *bhuti tāmbi* of paddy weighs 15 chittacks and a *lakshmīprashād tāmbi* 1 seer and 6 chittacks. Labourers are always paid in *bhuti tāmbis*.

usually works for one spell only. Women, who are usually employed on transplanting and weeding, also work only in the morning. At harvest time, however, and for all work for which oxen are not required the field labourer works both morning and afternoon, his full day's wage being equal to about $1\frac{1}{2}$ seers of husked rice.

The above is an utilitarian explanation of the practice, which the villagers themselves base on religious grounds. As mentioned in Chapter III, a *pūjā* called *kādobisti* (*kādo varishta*) is performed by the villagers during the month of Srāban, at which offerings are made to the Grām Devatā. After this ceremony the labourers work in the fields both morning and evening. Before it is performed, no field labourer will work after he has taken his midday meal, but he can work for the whole day if he is content to forego that meal.

Farm servants, called *gutis*, are generally hired by the year and receive a monthly wage of three *khandis* of paddy, *i.e.*, $56\frac{1}{4}$ seers, and also a bonus at harvest time of 3 *purugs* of paddy, *i.e.*, 450 seers. In the case of an old and trusted farm-servant, it is usual for his master to allow him, instead of this bonus, the cultivation of two plots of land, in the uplands and lowlands, with an area of about one acre. As he is allowed to use his master's cattle, this privilege adds considerably to his annual earnings, which are frequently sufficient to allow him to acquire small plots of tenancy lands in his own right. The *guti* also has a number of other emoluments. In the hot weather his master presents him with a cloth to protect his head from the sun. On special occasions, such as a birth, death or marriage, he is entitled to receive a loan of from Rs. 5 to Rs. 10, which is free of interest and is deducted from his harvest bonus. If sugarcane, pulses or oil-seeds are grown, he is allowed a small quantity from each crop in addition to his rice-land bonus. If he threshes on moonlight nights at harvest time, he is given an overtime wage at the end of threshing, the occasion being called *kalācharāni*, *i.e.*, the leaving of the threshing floor. At the end of the harvest too the last load—a specially heavy one—is his, if he can stagger with it to his own threshold without falling. The latter practice varies, however, for in some villages the *gutis* get a bundle each, in others one between them.

The overtime wage above mentioned consists of all the grain blown off with the husks during winnowing, besides one *kulā* (winnowing-fan) full of paddy per *mādan*. It may be explained that a stack of grain, estimated to yield 6 *purugs* of paddy, is usually spread out on the threshing yard at a time, and this is

called a *mādan*. For threshing one *mādan* at least three men are required to work alternately, each for about three hours, from 9 P.M. till early morning. After daybreak all three work together. If, however, a cultivator has more than three field servants, they all attend and divide the night's work between them. To thresh a *mādan* of paddy, 8 to 10 bullocks are required, and these are driven by each man for about 3 hours at a time. At sunrise all the straw is carefully removed, and the grain is stacked round the pole in the centre of the threshing floor. Then winnowing begins, the grain being allowed to fall from the *sūp* or winnowing-fan and then fanned. After the winnowing is over—a task which takes 3 men about 6 hours for one *mādan*—all the husks are collected and are further winnowed by the field servants. The husks yield about 25 *tāmbis* of paddy per *mādan*, and this quantity is the perquisite of the field servants. It is further supplemented by one *sūp* of paddy per *mādan*, *i.e.*, about 5 *tāmbis*. The latter allowance is called *liākhiā*, and the former *pol*. Thus, for each *mādan* the field servants receive about 30 *tāmbis* of paddy per night. The wives of the *gutis* are bound to *līp* the threshing floor after every third threshing, *i.e.*, plaster it afresh with cowdung and earth. For this work they get no wages, and if they refuse to work, their husbands forfeit half the allowance of *pol*. It is obvious that the larger the number of field servants, the smaller are their earnings for overtime work, but they can make more if the outturn of paddy is large. Speaking generally, it may be estimated that the average wage for overtime work is 5 *tāmbis* per head a night. Occasionally the amount is fixed by contract, the usual rate being 2 *khandis* per annum for each *guti*.

On engaging a *guti*, it is a common practice to give him a few rupees as earnest money, which he has to pay back without interest when his service is over. If, however, he throws up the situation, interest is charged at 50 per cent.; and this has the effect of rendering the service of most *gutis* practically permanent.

Another class of labourer is known as a *kuthiā*, *i.e.*, a boy or old man who is not equal to as much work as a full-grown adult. A labourer of this class is paid according to agreement, sometimes at the rate of 2 *khandis* a month. In the Bargarh *tahsīl*, a *kuthiā* is a boy who is kept in the house, and is given his food and clothes and a present at the end of the year.

Until the district was opened up by the railway, prices were very low, as was only to be expected in a land-locked tract with little or no means of exporting its surplus. Since the advent PRICES.

of the railway, the prices of agricultural produce have been doubled. Twenty years ago, the price of rice in Sambalpur town frequently fell to 40 and 50 seers over a year's average, and in outlying villages it could be had at 80 seers. Three years ago it was reported that in Sambalpur the price never fell below 20 seers, that the lowest rate in the villages was 25 seers, while the average price in the Bargarh market was usually 2 seers cheaper than in Sambalpur. Since then the price has risen to 12 seers at Sambalpur and 15 seers in the interior; while in 1908, owing to a short crop locally and a heavy demand from outside, rice has been selling at about 8 seers per rupee in Sambalpur and 9 seers at Bargarh. The same upward tendency is equally marked in the case of other products. For example, the price of *til* before railway export became possible was seldom less than 20 seers. In 1887, it was reported that the average rate was 17 seers, whereas the average for the 10 years ending 1901-02 was 11 seers. The wholesale price of pulses has similarly risen from 24 to 12 seers, and the price of *gur* from 15 to 18 seers.

MATERIAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE. Mr. Nethersole, writing in 1887, gave the following sketch of the material condition of the people. "Under normal conditions far more rice is produced than is required for the food of the population, and any one who chooses to work hard has hitherto had little difficulty in maintaining himself and his family in relative comfort. Rice, which is the staple food, has been ordinarily very cheap, and a few days' labour has been sufficient to earn a stock of food for a much longer period. The people are by nature indolent, and are well content to remain idle, except at certain seasons of the year when they know they must sow and transplant their rice, and to make but little effort to improve their land in the intervals. The people of the district generally, though capable of steady and sustained labour and of forming habits of frugality, are not naturally inclined thereto, and I believe this is to a great extent because the food supply has hitherto been, as a rule, so plentiful and easily procured that they have not been forced to exert themselves. It is obvious that, without previous exertion, there could be no accumulation of capital in the Garden of Eden itself." At the same time, he was of opinion that probably more than half of the cultivators were more or less in debt, but under normal conditions there was not widespread poverty or distress of a chronic character among them.

In some respects there has been little change during the last 20 years, for the Deputy Commissioner reports:—"A trait of many of the people of Sambalpur, especially among the

lower classes, is their lack of energy. They would rather spend a day in collecting food in the jungle than in working in the field; and, if they earn a little money, their chief desire is to sit idle until they have spent it." Among the more advanced cultivators, however, signal changes are noticeable, which are described as follows by Mr. Dewar, who carried out the settlement of 1906.

"Descriptions given by Mr. Nethersole represent the Sambalpur cultivator as an indolent person living with much simple comfort in patriarchal village communities. No man was rich except in grain, and no man was distressingly poor because the food-supply was cheap and abundant. The opening of railway communication has changed these conditions. The increased cost of food has enforced greater industry on the labourer and the poorer cultivator, and the opportunity of trade and profit has tempted the richer and more industrious to greater effort. The demand for land has become keener, and its cultivation closer and better. With this progress there has come some gradual breaking up of the communal life, and in a few cases an undesirable accumulation of land and of capital in the hands of money-lenders. But the essential purposes of village life are still well served, and even the money-lenders are still agriculturists. The main result hitherto of the stirring up of individual competition has been the establishment of a very large class of substantial cultivators, by habit thrifty and industrious, with adequate holdings, good stock, and savings sufficient to allow of independent improvement and extension. The distinction between such men and the lower class of semi-aboriginals with debts and small holdings is much more clearly marked than formerly. At the last settlement Mr. Nethersole noted the gulf fixed between the *gaontiās* and the ryots. But there are now three distinct classes above the rank of labourer, and the upper class of the ryots is not far below the landlords in prosperity.

"The standard of comfort has not conspicuously altered. The food, furniture and clothing of the average villager are very much the same now as in 1888. There has been no increase of outlay on religious or domestic festivals. But when substantial comfort has been attained, the refusal of luxury is not to be deplored. The people themselves, when asked to point out their changes, have usually explained that the old living has not changed, but is shared now by more families. Thus, though all still eat rice and vegetables only, more people now grow and eat fine rice. All still wear the old simple

clothing, but more now wear *bhuliā* cloths of fine quality. There are more tiled roofs and brick walls in the villages and bigger gardens, and more women are able to wear silver and gold ornaments. To this I may add that the old comfortable standard has been extended over considerable tracts formerly held by aboriginals living poorly in leaf huts, and that hundreds of villages have substantially added to their health and comfort by building special drinking tanks."

Zamīndārs. The most important of the different classes which make up the community are the feudal zamīndārs. Some, however, of the estates are much too small to support a landlord in any dignity, and their Gond zamīndārs are of much less importance than many *gaontiās* in the *khālsa*; while two of the larger estates, viz., Barpāli and Kolābirā, as well as Lairā and Garh Loisingh, are, owing to the indebtedness of their owners, under the management of the Court of Wards. The Rājput, Gond and Binjhāl chiefs of fighting and freebooting lineage have been slow to turn to the pursuits of peace. They are handicapped by the necessity, real or supposed, of maintaining the remnants of an ancient dignity. In the past their management has usually been careless and often short-sighted, and it has been the policy of Government to resume from them, on payment of compensation, as many as possible of their powers of internal management.

Tenants. The ryots are on the whole well-to-do, for, exclusive of small plots held as gardens, the average tenancy holding is now about 13 acres in extent, while in the zamīndāris, where land is less closely cultivated and joint families more common, the average area is 19 acres. This prosperity is largely due to the lightness of the rental, for the average rent paid is only about Rs. 3-8. Altogether 9 per cent (12 per cent. in the *khālsa* and 5½ per cent. in the zamīndāris) are well-to-do tenants, who have large holdings, even when they are not also proprietors. The most important members of this class are the *gaontiās*, whose home-farms usually consist of the best land of each village and are held rent-free. Enquiry has shewn that 83 per cent. of them are either affluent or entirely free from debt. A few, however, are heavily indebted, mostly Brāhmans who have multiplied in numbers and subdivided their original grants without adding to them.

The second class of ryots includes the substantial tenants, many of whom have recently extended their holdings, and all of whom have good stock and either no debts at all or very light ones. This class accounts for 40 per cent. of the ryots, and the average holding is 19 acres in the Bargarh *tahsīl* and 15½ acres

in the Sambalpur *tahsil*. The third class consists of those ryots who are moderately well off, having debts but no mortgage on or any particular risk of losing their holdings. They account for another 40 per cent. of the tenants, and include those semi-aboriginals who have failed to extend their holdings since the last settlement, but are content to carry on with small stock and moderate debts. The holding of a ryot of this class averages 9½ acres in Bargarh and 7 acres in Sambalpur *tahsīl.* His money debt averages Rs. 17 and his grain debt 2½ *purugs*, worth about Rs. 13. As the market value of his land alone is seldom less than Rs. 100, he is sufficiently solvent, but he has little margin for the accidents of famine, cattle-disease, or deaths in his family. The last class includes those tenants who are in reduced circumstances, who have become deeply indebted, or who have mortgaged their holdings, as well as those who live from hand to mouth, such as Gonds or ryots without bullocks, who have the same status as day-labourers. This class accounts for 11 per cent. of the tenants and includes most of the real aboriginals, whose holdings are insufficient to provide a full livelihood and who eke out cultivation by collecting forest produce. They are distinctly poor, seldom cultivate more than 5 acres of land, and usually have no cattle of their own ; while their land is continually liable to absorption in larger holdings. The Kols and Oraons, however, are as a class usually free from debt.

As regards the labouring classes, the earnings of a farm-servant or *guti* are estimated at Rs. 63-12 per annum, viz., 3 *khandis* of paddy worth Rs. 3 a month or Rs. 36 per annum, 3 *purugs* of paddy per annum valued at Rs. 24, the perquisites of *pol* and *liākhiā*, already explained, which are equivalent to about 3 *khandis* or Rs. 3, and one *dhotī* costing 12 annas. His income is, however, supplemented by the earnings of his womenfolk, as well as by the other allowances already mentioned. As regards the ordinary day-labourer, it was stated, as the result of the enquiries made at the time of the last settlement, that "the utmost that he can make by constant work is Rs. 2-8 per mensem. This income is largely added to by his women, who, besides being in constant demand at the seasons of transplanting, weeding and harvesting, are able to make good earnings in the *mahuā* season, and also to dry a stock of *mahuā* flowers for household use. At other seasons, in years of good harvest, they have practically continuous work at rice-husking. The income of the ordinary labourer's family, even at slack seasons, cannot be less than Rs. 3-8, which is sufficient for food, clothing, and the usual small comforts. The wage of a labourer is now, however, Labourers.

3 annas a day, or about Rs. 5 a month. But any saving is impossible, and in a year of crop-failure the labouring class, supported for a few months by scanty harvest earnings and by the rice-husking of the women, falls into destitution by January. They get but little work to do in the cane harvest, but profit by the fall of the *mahuā* flowers in February and March."

The day-labourer's position has improved even in the short time which has elapsed since the above remarks were recorded, for he has been able to hold out for a rise of wages. His wages have now risen to 3 annas a day or Rs. 5 a month; and it is noticeable that, though recently (in 1907-08) there was a short crop and prices rose higher than ever, there was no actual destitution. Possibly one reason for the lack of destitution is that the high prices were due more to the demand from outside than to the failure of crops, so that those who had paddy were able to make large profits and employ labour during the hot weather.

Supply of labour

Regarding the supply of labour, Mr. Foley remarks as follows in his *Report on Labour in Bengal* (1906). "The only emigration from the district is to Assam, and this emigration is falling off; the figures for 1902-03 being 7,712, which fell to 1,354 and 853 in the two following years.* There is no temporary emigration from the district in the off season. The district is more prosperous than the districts further east, wages have risen, the cultivated area is increasing, and there is no reason why any one should emigrate from the district. The most numerous caste is that of the Gāndās, a caste of weavers, but who do a good deal of thieving. They are, however, classed high as excellent workers in the tea gardens. The District Officers would be glad if as many Gāndās as possible could be induced to emigrate, but it is difficult to move them. They are of good physique and might do for dock work if they were given lines; also for coal, if they were recruited in the right way, a small body of men first being induced to go, and then used as *sardār* to recruit others. The people are probably too jungly for mills. On the whole, Sambalpur does not appear a promising district from which to obtain labour, and considering the difficulties experienced in obtaining tea garden labour, it should, perhaps, be left alone by industries other than tea"

Emigration to Assam.

The following account of emigration to the Assam tea gardens is quoted from an Appendix to the Report of the Assam Labour Enquiry Committee (1906). "The district contains a large number of Gāndās, who are low-caste weavers and

* The number fell to 214 in 1905-06 and 64 in 1906-07.

day-labourers, and addicted to thieving. They are said to make good labourers on a tea garden. A difficulty has of late arisen in their recruitment, as professional thieves went up to Assam in order to get sent down as garden *sardārs*. Under cover of their *sardārs'* certificates they were able to escape molestation in committing house-breaking and petty thefts. The district authorities refuse countersignature of *sardārs'* certificates in the case of men who have been convicted of theft, and suspected characters are liable to supervision by the police. This has interfered with recruitment The Gāndās are kept under strict control by the village headmen; until recently it was the practice for a roll-call to be taken in every village each night to see that the Gāndās were not out on the loose. Their lot is not a happy one, yet they have of late shown no indication to move from the district. Something might be done if a garden manager took down a number of Gāndās who had been some time in Assam, and through them offered to settle families who might be got to emigrate on rice land. The district authorities would be likely to help, as the Gāndā is not a man who would be missed. The local missionaries might also assist; they are keenly alive to the irksomeness of the watch and ward kept over the Gāndās in the villages.

"The general impression is that very little emigration is to be expected from Sambalpur. The district has not suffered much from famine; there is a good deal of land available for cultivation both in British territory and the surrounding Native States; and a settlement of the district has just been completed, so that considerable extension of cultivation is likely to take place. Agricultural labour is in great demand and is done largely by the small ryot. The landless labourer is not much in evidence. There has been no movement from the district for outside work. In the present prosperous condition of the district there is very little chance of moving the stay-at-home inhabitant of Sambalpur, unless perhaps the Gāndā can be induced to escape from the bondage in which he is held in his native village."

CHAPTER IX.

OCCUPATIONS, MANUFACTURES AND TRADE.

OCCUPATIONS.

Agricultural classes.

AT the census of 1901 it was ascertained that no less than 77·7 per cent. of the population of the district, as then constituted,* were supported by agriculture. Practically all the castes have some connection or other with land, but approved members of the Hindu social system, such as Brāhmans, Kultās, Telis and Mālis, form a full half of the tenantry and hold much more than half the land. Of the others, at least half are semi-aboriginals, such as Savarās, or, as they are called locally, Saharās, who have settled down to steady agriculture; but most of the Binjhāls, Khonds (Kandhs), Gonds, Gāndâs and Kisāns still exhibit aboriginal propensities. The number of field labourers, whether ordinary day-labourers or farm servants, is noticeably large, representing nearly a quarter of those supported by agriculture. The proportion of women among the former is also very marked, 60,000 women being returned as field-labourers as compared with 18,000 men—a fact which tends to shew that the main supply of day-labour is drawn from the ranks of the small cultivators.

Industrial classes.

The industrial classes are neither numerous nor important, with the exception of cloth-weavers, such as Koshtās, Bhuliās and Gāndâs, and workers in metal, such as Lohārs, Kharurâs, Kansāris and Sonārs. There is also a noticeable absence of certain classes of artisans common in other districts, such as shoe-makers, leather-workers and carpenters. Shoes are but little used, because the sandiness of the soil obviates the need of them, and also because religious sentiment is strong; the uses to which leather may be put by the agriculturist are consequently few. Practically, all hides are exported in a raw state, and the shoes worn by the well-to-do are imported. Carpentry, moreover, is not a village industry, as in other parts of India. Even in Sambalpur town there are only about a dozen carpenters: and they have little skill or training. In the villages a handy farm-labourer will do all the modest joinering that is needed for

* Statistics of the district as now constituted are not available.

house-building, for making sleeping-cots, ploughs, cane-mills, carts, etc.

Women constitute the majority not only of the field-labourers, but also of the retail merchants. It is the usual practice for the wives and relatives of farm-labourers and cultivators to buy up grain in small quantities, husk it at home, and sell it at the weekly village markets. At these markets grain, cloths, vegetables, sweets, firewood, salt, spices, tobacco, oil, trinkets and cattle are sold and bought; and almost all the trading, except in cattle, is done by women, young and old. The wholesale grain-dealers are local Brāhmans, Cutchī Muhammadans and Mārwāris, who buy grain and sell imported cotton thread, salt, tobacco, kerosene oil and cloth. The Cutchī trader is usually a temporary visitor, coming at harvest time to buy the cultivators' grain, and leaving the district in the spring. He is a pioneer in trade and penetrates to the remotest tracts, but though he is much in evidence at the village markets, he does not now command the bulk of the grain trade. His capital is usually small, and he is content with quick returns and small profits. Many Cutchīs, however, have now settled permanently at Sambalpur, Jharsagurā, Lobelā and Padampur with their families, and like the Mārwāris carry on trade throughout the year. Most of these Cutchī settlers are contractors for the minor produce of the zamīndāri forests, *e.g.*, *mahuā*, lac, myrobalans, etc. Mercantile classes.

The number of settled Mārwāri traders in Sambalpur town, Jharsagurā, and the larger villages, has also increased greatly of late years, their numbers rising from 1,223 to 2,867 between 1891 and 1901. They do business wholesale, buying from Brāhman traders or from their regular clients in the villages, and they avoid the cheating to which the Cutchī is subjected by giving out grain to be hulled by women who are in their regular employ.

The industries and manufactures of the district are not of any great importance, consisting of small hand industries carried on by village artisans in order to supply the simple needs of the villagers. With the exception of silk fabrics and stone work, few of the manufactured articles are exported, and most of the products merely supply the local demand. The following is a brief account of the principal industries. MANUFACTURES.

Tusser silk weaving has been the principal industry of Sambalpur for the last half century. Dr. Shortt, who visited Silk weaving.*

* This account of the silk weaving industry has been compiled mainly from Mr. F. Dewar's *Monograph on the Silk Fabrics of the Central Provinces* (1901) and Mr. N. G. Mukerji's *Report on an Enquiry into the State of the Tasar Silk Industry in Bengal and the Central Provinces* (1905).

Sambalpur in 1855, found that tusser silk was manufactured to a great extent, the fabrics being used locally and also exported. In 1864 the Deputy Commissioner, Major Cumberlege, reported that five large villages or towns were occupied in weaving tusser, and in each, at the very lowest computation, 1,000 *thāns* or pieces were produced annually. The culture of the tusser silk worm was carried on in almost every jungle village, and at least 7½ million cocoons were produced. Only one-third of the cloth remained in the district, the rest being exported to Cuttack, Ganjām and Berhampore, and also to Raipur and Bilāspur; and it is clear that the industry was then in a flourishing condition. Again, in 1876 it was reported that Sambalpur was more advanced than other districts of the Central Provinces both in the quality of the cocoons exported, and in the workmanship of the cloth produced by its weavers. The export of manufactured tusser had apparently fallen off, but half of the cocoons produced were sent out to Ganjām, Cuttack, Raipur, and Bilāspur.

Since that time the industry has declined still further, the local supply of tusser cocoons having decreased in quantity, degenerated in quality, and risen in price. The closer conservation of Government forests, the clearing of village forests, which were most convenient to the rearers, unfavourable seasons, and lack of care and capital on the part of the breeders are all said to have contributed to this result. For the rearing of tusser worms differs widely from the rearing of the ordinary silk-worm, in that the latter is a domesticated insect, whereas the tusser worm thrives best when in the jungle. Not being able to have access to forests, the rearers have not renewed their stock of cocoons from wild seed. Consequently, deterioration has set in, diseases, such as grasserie, have become common, and the cocoons do not contain as much silk as formerly. Even as long ago as 1892, the rearing of the tusser worm in Government and *mālguzāri* forests had practically ceased. It was then reported that the cocoon rearers had migrated to Feudatory States, where, although taxed, they were at least given strips of forest, and that the weavers drew their supplies of cocoons only from those States and from the zamīndāris. This is exactly the condition of affairs which still exists, except that the weavers now have to go further afield for their supply, and obtain most of the cocoons from Singhbhūm and the Baud State.

There is ample proof that the weavers would welcome a large increase in the supply. At present, they cannot keep their looms working on tusser alone for more than six months in the year,

Many have taken to agriculture as a secondary occupation for the slack season, and many have given up tusser weaving altogether. On the other hand, they find no difficulty in disposing of as much cloth as they can weave. The quantity, however, is not large, and it is significant of the decline of the industry that, some years ago, when an English firm established an agent in Sambalpur to buy up cocoons and tusser silk for export, the enterprise proved a failure. "In Sambalpur," wrote Mr. N. G. Mukerji in 1905, "the cocoon-rearing industry is almost dead. The worms nearly all die off from disease, and cocoon-rearing is no longer worth doing. The rearers use their home-grown cocoons for seed, and I attribute the bad result to this." Another reason for the decline in cocoon-rearing is probably that the people who cultivate the land do not cultivate tusser, and consequently cut down *āsan* (or *sāhāj*) trees when clearing for cultivation. That tree is quite as common in Sambalpur as in Singhbhūm, but the Hos, who rear tusser cocoons in the latter district, leave a large number standing when they clear waste land, whereas in Sambalpur the Gāndās, who rear the tusser worm, are as a rule not cultivators, while the regular cultivating classes will not engage in cocoon-rearing.

Sericultural experiments have so far been unsuccessful. Some were made in 1869, but the conclusion drawn was that the complete domestication of the tusser-worm would cost so much as to leave no profit for the produce. In 1876 the Deputy Commissioner conducted still more careful experiments, but it was found that domestication could not pay in competition with ordinary native methods. In 1895 an attempt was made to introduce the *eri* worm into Sambalpur, but was also unsuccessful. Mr. Mazumdār, Head-Master of the Sambalpur High School, bred a quantity of *eri* worms with very good results, and the cocoons were distributed among the schools of the district in the hope that this domesticated worm might be adopted, but the people took no interest in this innovation. In 1904 Mr. N. G. Mukerji conducted an experiment in the Jhārghāti forest, in order to ascertain if silk-worms reared from wild seed would give better results than those grown from local home-grown seed by the indigenous rearers, but the experiment was a failure. Success, however, attended another experiment, instituted in the same year with the object of securing quick and even eclosion of moths from the large and hard wild cocoons, called *mugās*, by opening out the chrysalids from them.

The rearing of the tusser worm (locally called *kosā*) is carried on by Gāndās, chiefly on the *sāhāj* tree (*Terminalia tomentosa*).

Spinning and weaving are a monopoly of the Koshtās, the centres of the industry being Sambalpur, Remendā and Barpāli. At the census of 1901 there was a population of 1,867 Koshtās, but only 786 were returned as having any connection with the weaving industry. Many have given up weaving altogether, many now weave partly in cotton, and many cultivate land. Those who still follow the industry turn out good cloths and make fair profits. The fabrics are of good quality and are usually ornamented with tasteful borders and fringes. Mr. N. G. Mukerji states, in fact, that "the intrinsic merits of the Sambalpur tusser cloths (*dhotīs*, *sārīs* and *thāns*) are very great. In quality the Sambalpur tusser excels Bengal tusser, and the skill of the Sambalpur spinners is greater than that of tusser-spinners of any other district. In lustre, in evenness of weaving, in neatness of design, the Barpāli tusser of Sambalpur is superior to all others, and it would be prized highly even in European markets. Barpāli being about 40 miles in the interior of the Sambalpur district, the merits of this tusser are not so widely known as they deserve to be." Mr. Mukerji is no less eulogistic of the methods of reeling practised, saying that "the quantity turned out by an expert reeler comes up almost to what is turned out in European factories, and the quality of the silk is very even."

The following is a more detailed account of the different kinds of cloths woven in the local looms. (1) *Mathās* or *dhotīs* and *pāchhudās* are pieces worked in one length from 7½ to 8 yards long; a *dhotī* is usually 5 yards and a *pāchhudā* 3 yards long, but the whole is made in one piece and separated for use. The body of the cloth is undyed, but the borders are worked in yellow and crimson patterns; prices range from Re. 1 to Re. 1-12 per yard. *Dhotīs* and *pāchhudās* are also woven separately, and more cheaply, with only a narrow half-inch border. The breadths vary slightly from 37 to 42 inches, and the better cloths are usually the broader. (2) *Sārīs* are sometimes dyed yellow in the body of the cloth, but this does not look so well as the natural colour. There is invariably a coloured end or fringe about a yard long, the prevailing colour of which is crimson. The crimson and yellow border is also invariable, but occasionally blue is effectively added to the pattern. The *sārī* is usually 7 or 8 yards long, and prices rise from Rs. 8 to Rs. 15 according to quality. Fine work can be got at Re. 1-8 per yard. (3) *Pagris* are only 2 feet broad and 8 yards long. They are undyed, except for a plain narrow crimson border; and their price varies from 8 annas to Re. 1 per yard. (4) Plain cloth is made with a 36-inch

breadth, in any length required, and is very durable. It ranges in quality from 4 to 8 ply, and the better kind is suitable for European wear. The price ranges from 12 annas to Re. 1-8 per yard. (5) Checked cloth is nothing else than plain cloth checked out with narrow crimson or black lines. (6) Twill is not a common article, but can be made to order. It is undyed, is very heavy and durable, but does not keep the gloss of thinner cloth. The price is Rs. 2 or Rs. 2-4 per yard. Borders, usually not more than one inch broad, are introduced in the warp of cotton cloths. The tusser threads are usually yellow. This looks effective when the colour of the cotton cloth is red or green. A *sārī* so ornamented costs Rs. 2-12.

The present state of the industry is described as follows in Mr. F. Dewar's *Monograph on the Silk Fabrics of the Central Provinces*. "The western *tahsīl* is the more important. Three-fourths of the tusser woven there is bought up and exported to Ganjām. The local demand is frequently left unsatisfied. The weavers could make a far larger output if they had more raw material; and if the supply were regular and plentiful, the number of tusser weavers could indefinitely increase. In the eastern *tahsīl*, which has railway communication, there are fewer weavers, and they are still worse off. The outturn of the *tahsīl* in cocoons is not large, and the bulk of it is at once exported to Raipur, which has no cultivation of its own, and Bilāspur, where the weaving industry is advancing without being accompanied by an advance in tusser cultivation. This competition tells on the price of cocoons, and the local variations are great. One Koshtā, an agricultural labourer, told me—"It is only the richer people in our caste who weave tusser. My father used to do it, because in those days cocoons were cheap."

"A Koshtā must buy up in November or December enough cocoons to last him for a year. That will be probably about 40,000 cocoons, if his work is to be regular. At the former rates this would mean an expenditure of from Rs. 80 to Rs. 120. But, as prices now run from Rs. 5 to Rs. 7 per thousand, his stock would cost from Rs. 200 to Rs. 280. Few weavers can command this amount of money, and the consequence is that at the proper season they buy only so far as their money will go, and then after disposing of cloths, buy cocoons again, if they are lucky enough to find any rearer with a stock left in hand. In any case the second buying is the more expensive. . . In quite ordinary years the Koshtā's supply of cocoons is apt to give out prematurely. He frequently carries on agriculture as a secondary occupation. If he has no land, he fills up his slack

season by weaving cotton, and if possible, preserves a slender stock of tusser thread to be used in weaving narrow silk borders to his cotton cloths."

Cotton weaving. Cotton cloth of a coarse texture, but of considerable taste in colour and variety of pattern, is also woven in large quantities, imported thread being used almost exclusively. It is generally worn by natives of the district in preference to mill-woven cloth. Fine cotton cloths with coloured borders are woven by Bhuliās, a caste numbering 12,241 in 1901. The industry does not appear to have been affected by the competition of imported machine-made cloths, for practically all the Bhuliā families still weave, and many of them also have land. There are probably two reasons for this survival of the local industry. The Bhuliā works for the well-to-do, and though his customers appreciate the lower price and lighter texture of the machine-made stuff, they buy the better and dearer article because it wears much longer, keeps its colour, and is in the end cheaper. The second reason is that imported cloths are not usually of the correct width or length for women's wear, and their borders cannot compare in appearance with the work of the Bhuliā.

Coarse cotton cloths of the cheapest qualities are woven by the Gāndās; but they suffer greatly from the competition of the machine-loom, because their customers belong to the poorer classes, who buy what is cheapest, whether it wears well or not. Many Gāndās still own looms, though they are not able to keep them regularly at work. Imported thread from the Nāgpur and Wardha mills is generally used. The principal centres of the cotton weaving industry are reported to be Sambalpur, Barpāli, Remendā, Rāmpelā, Rājpur, Bijepur, Talpatiā, Dhāmā, Bheran, Katapāli (4 miles from Bargarh), and Chichendrā near Remendā.

Iron work. Iron ores are found in the hilly country on the borders of the district, particularly in the Borāsāmbar, Kolābirā, Lairā, Pahārsirgirā, and Rāmpur zamīndāris, and in the Bārapahār hills. Some of them are of good quality, those in the Sambalpur zamīndāris, especially in Lairā, being said to be superior to those of the Bargarh zamīndāris. They are worked by indigenous methods only, and those methods are very primitive. The following description given over 50 years ago by Dr. Shortt still holds good, no change of any kind having been effected. "In the process for obtaining iron from the stone, no flux is used; it is smelted by means of charcoal. The furnace stands about 4 feet in height, and the width inside is 1 foot. Three men are employed at each furnace, two to work the bellows and one as feeder. The

furnace is closed at the bottom, the fire being maintained by an artificial blast introduced through a fire-clay pipe, which is closed with clay after the introduction of the bellows, whose tubes are made of common bamboos, which play into the fire-pipe. The materials consist of charcoal and ironstone; the latter is broken into pieces, and put, together with the charcoal, into the furnace, which is constantly being supplied from the top. On another side a hole is made in the ground, connected with an opening at the bottom of the furnace, through which the slag escapes and is from time to time removed, leaving the metal below."*

Iron smelting and the manufacture of iron articles are a monopoly of the Lohārs, who numbered 7,230 at the last census. They are found chiefly in the zamīndāri villages, more especially in Borāsāmbar, Lairā, Pahārsirgirā and Rāmpur, near forests which they can cut freely for charcoal. There are about 140 furnaces at work, and the iron produced is used for the manufacture of agricultural implements, such as plough-shares. Cart-wheel tyres, however, are imported; and when old, are cut up into lengths of about 2 feet each, which are converted into plough-shares. A few smiths are still able to manufacture in fairly tempered metal the finely curved hatchet which was once the battle-axe of this country. But owing to the faultiness of the surface-ore extracted and to the primitive methods of smelting, the implements usually made are apt to be soft and brittle. Twenty years ago iron boiling pans for sugarcane were manufactured, but they were found to flake readily on the fire, and their manufacture has been discontinued. The articles now most commonly made are the *kuri* or hoe and the spoons and strainers used in cooking rice, while in villages where the Lohār is still a public servant, he makes axle-pins and the coulters of ploughs.

Brass and bell-metal.

A large bell-metal industry exists in Sambalpur town, where a number of Kansāris work only in bell-metal, and at Tukrā (or Kalātukrā), a village near Kādobahāl in the Bargarh *tahsīl*. A number of artisans are also found in Remendā, Barpāli and Bijepur, and a few at Rāmpelā and Katapāli. The artisans are Kharurās and Kansāris, and the articles most commonly turned out are *lotās*, bowls, basins, plates, saucers, drinking-mugs, water-cans, lamp-stands and pipes, besides the curious boat-shaped anklets worn by many women. Brass cooking and water-pots (*kalsīs*) are usually imported from Orissa, but are now being made locally to a small extent, for during the famine of 1900 some brass-workers migrated from the south and settled in Tukrā, and

* Medical Topography of the South-Western Political Districts, 1855.

the local workmen are trying to acquire the craft. The old brass-work of the district is often curious and much superior to anything now attempted, but it is melted down without regard to its artistic superiority.

Gold and silver ware.

Gold and silver ornaments are made by the local caste of Sonārs. The ornament most commonly made, which is to be seen on the necks even of cooly women, is the *khagalā*, a band of silver lying flat on the bosom and encircling the neck as a thick round wire. Other common articles of silver are the bangles, armlets, and anklets worn by women, the round ring worn on their wrists by men, and broad flexible silver-wire waist-belts. The usual gold ornaments are amulets, necklets, nose-buttons, earrings for the lobe and tip of the ear, and finger rings. Among other products of the silversmith's art are fancy articles of silver, such as imitations of the royal canopy or umbrella and figures of beasts, which are said to be not much inferior in finish to the silver work of Cuttack.

Mines.

As stated in Chapter I, diamond mining used to be an important industry; but some years ago, when a syndicate of capitalists obtained a lease authorizing them to search for diamonds in or near the Mahānadī above the town of Sambalpur, the operations proved a failure, as no traces of diamonds could be found. Sanction has recently been given to the grant to Dīwān Bahādur Kastur Chānd Daga of Kāmpti of a license to prospect for precious stones and other minerals within the limits of *mauzā* Hīrākud and the two branches of the river Mahānadī, the total area being 4,215 acres. Gold is found in small quantities in the rivers Mahānadī and Ib, where gold washers called Jhorās work on a small scale. The particles extracted weigh less than a *rati* each. Traces of gold have also been discovered at Gobindpur in the Bārapahār hills, but not in sufficient quantity to repay working. Mica is found in Lapangā and in the Loisingh zamīndāri and has been assayed by an European contractor, but its quality is not good enough for exploitation.

Coal has been discovered in the Rāmpur and Kodābagā zamīndāris, the seam running below the river Ib. In 1902 a prospecting license for one year was granted to the Bombay Mineral Syndicate, which made some borings in the former estate. In 1905 Mr. P. C. Dutt of Jubbulpore took out a prospecting license for coal and other minerals in Jhunān village in the Sambalpur *tahsīl*, and the license was renewed till 1907, but all that has been extracted so far is a small quantity of galena. There is a limestone quarry at Lahrā Behrā, a village in the Bargarh *tahsīl*, which was leased out in 1901 for a term of

3 years; but the lessee soon had the lease cancelled, presumably because quarrying did not pay. The village has since been included in the Bārapahār forest reserves, and quarrying has ceased. Enquiries have recently been made regarding a limestone deposit at Dungri, a village situated about 8 miles from Lahrā Behrā and almost surrounded by the hills of the Bārapahār range; and an exploring license was issued in 1899 and again in 1903.

Stone carving. Carving in stone is the hereditary function of a caste known as Sānsiās. The caste has two subdivisions, the Benariā and the Khandait Oriyā. The former still practise carving, but the craft has been given up by the latter, who are said to have been formerly soldiers in the Rājā's army. The stone generally used for carving small images is a black stone resembling marble or a green stone like jade, but a fine red sandstone called *dālimā* is used for larger figures. The *dālimā* stone is rarely found in the district, but is imported from Kālāhandī. The stone mostly used is quarried at Sāsan and is well adapted for chiselling. The articles made of the Sāsan stone are exported to Raipur, Bilāspur and Nāgpur; and the industry, small as it is, has flourished of late years in Sambalpur.

Minor industries. Among minor industries may be mentioned bamboo work, which is in the hands of Turis, Mahārs, Kandiās, Birjiās and Bitrās. Drums are made by the Ghāsiās, which the Kols use largely for their dances. At Kumelsingh, 8 miles from Sambalpur, at Lastalā, 6 miles from Bargarh, and at Barpāli, leather saddles are made in imitation of Cawnpore saddles. This is a new industry recently introduced. Glass bangles are made in several villages, the glass being imported from Cawnpore and mixed with zinc and lead to give it different colours.

TRADE. Rice is the staple export and is sent principally to Calcutta, but also to Bombay, Karāchi, Chotā Nāgpur and Berār. Other exports include oil-seeds, hemp, hides, bones, dried meat, and forest products, such as timber, lac and wax. The export of hides has grown in importance since the opening of the railway, and is carried on by Muhammadans, who work through Chamār and Gāndā agents in the villages. The export of dried meat is also controlled by them; but there is one large local Chamār firm. The principal imports are salt, sugar, kerosene oil, piece-goods, cotton cloth, cotton yarn, various cereals, and coal for the railway. Sugar is obtained from Mirzāpur and Mauritius, the Mauritius sugar finding a ready sale owing to its cheapness; and *gur* or unrefined sugar is imported from Bengal. Kerosene oil is brought from Calcutta, and cotton cloth and yarn from Calcutta and the Nāgpur mills. Wheat, gram and *arhar* are also

imported, as they are not grown locally in sufficient quantities to meet the demand.

Centres of trade.

Sambalpur and Bargarh are the principal centres of trade, but there are also markets of some importance at Bhuktā near Ambābhonā, Dhāmā and Talpatiā. Bargarh, Bhuktā and Talpatiā are the chief cattle markets. Professional cattle dealers go out to the Pātnā and Kālāhandī States and to the Khariār zamīndāri in the Raipur district, and bring herds of cattle, mostly bullocks and cows, for sale at the Bargarh bazar. Bhuktā is the principal market for buffaloes, herds of these animals being brought in from Bilāspur and purchased at this place by professional dealers of the district, who subsequently bring them for sale to Bargarh. Talpatiā is a market for cattle, and is visited by the professional dealers of the northern portion of the Sambalpur *tahsīl*. Among other trade centres may be mentioned Jāmurla, which is an entrepot for oil-seeds; Dhāmā, which is a large timber market; and Bhikampur, Katarbagā and Talpatiā, which are centres for the sale of country-made iron implements. A certain amount of trade in grain and household utensils is transacted at the annual fairs of Narsinghnāth and Hūmā; but most of the trade is carried on at village *hāts*.

Trade routes.

The following account of the trade routes is quoted from Mr. Dewar's Settlement Report. "The trade of the district now follows four lines :—(1) The Sambalpur-Jharsagurā branch railway taps all the eastern *tahsīl* and all the eastern and southern part of Bargarh *tahsīl*. Into Sambalpur by way of the Bargarh market comes also a considerable part of the exports of the Pātnā and Sonpur States in cotton, hides and hemp. East of the Mahānadī the States of Rairākhol, Bāmra and Gāngpur send into Sambalpur and Jharsagurā large quantities of these products and also timber and grain. (2) But the river trade and that of the Sonpur-Ganjām road still survive, and from the southern portion of these tracts some produce still goes south along with surplus railway imports. (3) The stations of Kharsiā and Raigarh on the main line of the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway drain the produce of the Chandarpur-Padampur tract and that of all the northern part of the Bargarh *tahsīl*. It is worthy of note that a very considerable quantity of rice is carried in head-loads out of the Bargarh plain for fifty miles over the Bārapahār range and across the unbridged Mahānadī to Raigarh. The mileage and the roadway are in favour of the Sambalpur terminus, but the fees and the delays of the pontoon at Sambalpur tell against it, and trade is drawn north by the higher range of prices on the main line These stations also ship the produce of the Sārangarh and Raigarh States.

(4) The Bargarh zamīndāris send most of their produce westward down the main road to Raipur. The distances range from 80 to over 120 miles, but three important factors determine the run of trade. The roadway in Raipur district is much better than in Sambalpur, and the crossing of the Mahānadi is easier than that to the north; Raipur offers main line prices; and oil-seeds—a very important part of the produce of these estates—are in demand at Raipur, where a successful oil-mill has been running for some years."

CHAPTER X.

MEANS OF COMMUNICATION.

DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS.

UNTIL a comparatively recent date Sambalpur was isolated to a marked degree and but ill-provided with means of internal communication. In the first half of last century, however, the overland mail from Calcutta to Bombay passed through it, and the records of the Mutiny shew that the *dāk* road, as it was called, was infested by bands of rebels, who burnt down some of the *dāk* stations. Other roads were few in number and not fit for wheeled traffic, and the main highway of commerce was the river Mahānadī, along which navigation then as now was intermittent. Still, wheat, gram and lac came down by road and river from Chhattīsgarh to Sambalpur, and, with the produce of the district, were transported down-stream to Cuttack in the autumn months while the river ran deep. From the coast European goods, coconuts and salt were brought up by road or river. Even as late as 1874 the Settlement Officer reported that the district had no road worthy of the name; and in the Report on the Settlement of 1885-89 Mr. (now Sir) J. B. Fuller stated that hitherto the only trade routes of any importance had been the river Mahānadī and a cart track from Ganjām *viâ* Sonpur and Binkā, though the Raipur-Sambalpur road was used for the district mails.

Since that time communications in and through Sambalpur have been developed considerably. The main line of the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway was extended through the north of the Sambalpur subdivision in 1890, and a branch line to the town of Sambalpur was opened in 1894. Much has also been done to open new roads and improve old roads, especially since the transfer of the district to Bengal; and there are now 29 miles of metalled and 119 miles of unmetalled roads in the district. The number and length of the roads are, however, obviously small, compared with other Bengal districts; and many parts of the district are difficult of access. This is due chiefly to the configuration of the country, which is intersected by hill ranges, and to the want of bridges over the numerous streams and rivers.

The main line of the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway traverses the north of the Sambalpur subdivision for a length of about 30 miles, the stations being Bāgdihi, Jharsagurā (Jharsugrā) and Belpahār. From Jharsagurā a branch line, 31 miles long, runs to the town of Sambalpur, the intermediate stations being Lapangā, Rengāli and Sāsan. Proposals have been made for the construction of a railway from Sambalpur *viâ* Sonpur to Khurdā, a junction in the Purī district, on the Madras-Calcutta line of the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway. This line, which would have a length of 220 miles, has been partially surveyed. RAILWAYS.

The administration of the more important roads rests with the Public Works Department; and an Executive Engineer is stationed at Sambalpur, who has under his control 29 miles of metalled and 63 miles of unmetalled roads. The upkeep of the less important roads, such as surface and unembanked roads, is entrusted to the District Council, which manages 56 miles of unmetalled roads, besides a number of village tracks with an aggregate length of 120 miles. The following is a brief description of the most important roads. ROADS.

The principal road of the district is the Raipur road, which forms part of the old Great Eastern Road, which was the main trunk route from Nāgpur to Raipur, Sambalpur and Cuttack. Starting from Sambalpur, this road crosses the Mahānadī by a pontoon bridge, which is replaced by ferry boats during the rains, and then traverses the Bargarh subdivision from east to west. It passes through Atābirā, Bargarh, Chakerkend and Sohelā (40 miles from Sambalpur), and leaves the district a few miles to the east of the place last named. There are Public Works bungalows at Atābirā (17 miles from Sambalpur) and Bargarh (29 miles), besides a bungalow off the road at Chakerkend (37 miles), and rest-houses for subordinates of the Public Works Department at Bābuband and Loharāchatti. Ferries are provided over the Jhaonjor stream (15 miles from Sambalpur), the Dantājhaonjor (22 miles), the Jirā at Bargarh and three nullahs in the 124th, 135th and 151st miles. Raipur road.

This is the best cart road in the district, being embanked where necessary, metalled between Sambalpur and Bargarh, and gravelled elsewhere. There are, however, but few bridges over the rivers and streams which it crosses, so that it is not an expeditious route even in the open season. Its feeder roads, moreover, are little better than surface tracks, and consequently communication with the more backward and remote hill tracts to the north and south-east is difficult. The Sohelā-Barpāli, Sohelā-Sonimal and Bargarh-Bolangir roads are being improved, however, and it

is also proposed to take up the Bargarh-Bijepur-Padampur road and the Bargarh-Bhatli-Sārangarh road as soon as funds permit.

Sonpur road.

Next in importance is the Sonpur road, which leads from Sambalpur along the eastern bank of the Mahānadī river to Dhāmā and thence to Sonpur. Its total length is 52 miles, of which 29 miles lie in this district, but realignment has been sanctioned. At present, the road crosses the Mahānadī at Dhāmā, a little over 15 miles from Sambalpur, where the river is very wide and is split up into two channels. It has therefore been decided not to cross at Dhāmā, but to keep on the left till opposite Binkā in the Sonpur State and to have the crossing there. This will necessitate the construction of an entirely new road, about 7 miles long, from Dhāmā to the Sonpur border, from which latter place to opposite Binkā there is a road maintained by the Rājā of Sonpur. The proposed road, besides affording a better crossing of the Mahānadī, will be shorter than the existing route by about 3 miles, and the length of the road under the Public Works Department will be reduced from 29 to 22 miles. There is a cart track from Dhāmā towards the Sonpur border, and in aligning the new length of the road the general direction of the cart track has been followed. It also has been decided to improve the existing road from Sambalpur to Dhāmā, of which 3 miles were moorumed (*i.e.* gravelled) by the District Council before the road was made over to the Public Works Department. The remaining 12 miles of the old road, as well as the length to be newly constructed, will be gravelled and bridged, only 2 nullahs between Sambalpur and Dhāmā, viz., the Māltijor in the 4th mile (400 feet broad) and the Jhuljor in the 14th mile (275 feet broad) being left unbridged for the present. Provision has also been made for the construction of an inspection bungalow at Dhāmā and of a rest-shed at Sāhāspur (at 9th mile). The work is now in progress.

Cuttack road.

Another road which is also to be improved is the Cuttack road, which is a valuable trade route, for it is the only means of communication between Sambalpur and the States of Rairākhol and Athmallik, and it forms part of the main route from Cuttack to Sambalpur. The portion of the road lying in this district (known as the *khālsa* section) has a length of 25½ miles. It has a very heavy traffic of carts carrying *sāl* sleepers from the State forests to Sambalpur, but hitherto it has not been passable in all weathers; for when the construction of the road was commenced in 1901, earth-work was done in an unsystematic way up to the 22nd mile, and the last 3½ miles were left untouched. It has now been decided to gravel the road and to construct a number of culverts and bridges. Four streams will be left unbridged, viz., the

Māltijor in the 5th mile, the Hāthibāri in the 13th, the Bhīmkhoj in the 16th, and the Kāyakud in the 24th mile, but ferries are provided for these streams. It has also been decided to construct two inspection bungalows on the road, viz., at Mundher at the 10th mile and at Jujumāra at the 20th mile. The work is now in progress.

Bargarh-Bolangir road. Similar improvements are to be made in the Bargarh-Bolangir road, which runs from Bargarh to Barpāli and thence to Bolangir, the capital of the Pātnā State. Up to Barpāli, which is 11 miles south of Bargarh, there is a good gravelled unbridged road, but south of this up to the Sonpur border, a distance of about 7½ miles, there is only a cart track maintained by no one. It has been decided to construct this latter portion, and so link up with the road in the Sonpur State. Just south of Barpāli the road will cross two nullahs with rocky banks, over which bridges will be built. In the 16th mile the river Ranj has to be crossed, which has a sandy bed, 500 feet wide; and here good metalled approaches and a ferry boat will be provided. The road will be raised above high flood level, all the unbridged gaps will be bridged except the Ranj river, and the whole length of the road will be gravelled for a width of 12 feet so as to be passable by motor cars in all seasons. It has also been decided to build an inspection bungalow at Barpāli and another at the Sonpur border.

Other roads. Among other roads may be mentioned three radiating from Sambalpur. To the north-west the Bilāspur road leads to Bilāspur along the bank of the Mahānadī *viâ* Murā, Baghrā and Padampur; to the south-east is a road leading to Bāmra and Midnapore, of which 14 miles lie in this district; and to the north-east is the old road to Rānchī. At present, the road last named is not maintained beyond Sāsan, and in places cannot even be found. The District Council proposes, however, to make a road in this direction as soon as it can provide funds. The Bilāspur road, which has been allowed to deteriorate, is also to be improved; and the District Council proposes to take up the improvement of the Bargarh-Bijepur-Padampur road and the Bargarn Bhatli-Sārangarh road.

The roads in the Borāsāmbar zamīndāri were made, at the expense of the estate, by the Court of Wards, and are now maintained by the zamīndār with the aid of a grant from the District Council. Some of them were originally moorumed, but funds do not at present permit of more than repairs to the earthwork. They are, however, good fair-weather roads.

WATER COMMUNICATIONS. The river Mahānadī was formerly the main outlet for the trade of the district, and boat transport is still carried on as far as Sonpur; but since the opening of the railway, river-borne trade

with Cuttack has greatly diminished. Boats can also ascend the Mahānadī as far as Arang in the Raipur district, but this route is not much used, the bed of the river being rocky and broken by rapids in portions of its course.

In flood time boats take 5 days to reach Cuttack from Sambalpur, while the journey to Sonpur lasts one day and to Binkā 6 hours. At other times the length of the journey depends on how often they are stranded on the sand or between rocks—a frequent occurrence soon after the rains, owing to the low depth of water in the river and the numerous rocks cropping up in its bed. The duration of the return journey is much longer. In July and November it takes laden boats 25 days and 21 days respectively to reach Sambalpur from Cuttack, 6 and 5 days from Sonpur and 5 and 4 days respectively from Binkā.

Boats. The boats mostly used are *dongās*, *kuslis*, *patwās* and *chāps*. *Dongās* are merely dug-outs, which are sometimes used for passenger traffic down to Cuttack. The other vessels are larger boats poled along by the boatmen and steered by a paddle tied to the stern, which is merely a long pole with a round piece of wood at the end. *Patwās* are long narrow boats made of *sāl* planks fastened together with iron nails. They run to a length of 75 to 90 feet and are used for the conveyance of grain up to the middle of December. They are poled, according to their size, by 6, 7 or 8 men, and cost Rs. 250 to Rs. 450. Boats of this kind hold from 150 to 200 maunds of grain. *Chāps* are merely *patwās* lashed together for the conveyance of cattle and carts, and are only used in flood time. *Kuslis* are similar in build to *patwās*, but broader, and are 45 to 60 feet long. A *kusli* manned by 3 men usually holds 60 maunds of grain, and one poled by 4 men 80 maunds. The cost is Rs. 120 and Rs. 150 respectively, while the largest *kusli*, which is manned by 5 men, costs Rs. 200. They ply in mid-stream on the Mahānadī for passenger traffic up to the end of March, but for the conveyance of grain up to the middle of February only. About this time the river runs low, and owing to the small depth of water and the rocks, they are steered with considerable difficulty.

When a *kusli* manned by 4 men is engaged by a merchant, he has to pay the wages of 6 men, the extra wages being made over to the owner. The rates are:—to Dhāmā 12 annas, to Binkā and Turum Re. 1-4, to Sonpur Re. 1-12, to Baud Rs. 3, and to Cuttack Rs. 5 per boatman. Each boatman receives for the journey up and down stream 1¼ seer of rice and 1 pice daily, and the man who hires the boat has to pay any extra money spent in extricating it from sand and rocks. The steersmen get 8 annas

each extra per stage. They are pilots who know the rocks and currents in their particular length of river and do not go beyond it. The Sambalpur steersmen go up to Baghrā and down to Dhāmā.

The district contains 65 post offices and 995 miles of postal communication. The number of postal articles delivered in 1906-07 was 1,088,256, including 540,228 letters, 378,846 post cards, 69,498 packets, 86,840 newspapers and 12,844 parcels. The value of the money orders issued in the same year was Rs. 9,11,639 and of those paid Rs. 4,27,906. In 1907-08 there were 1,096 deposits in the Savings Bank, the total amount deposited being Rs. 2,19,319. There are also 5 telegraph offices in the district. POSTAL COMMUNICATIONS.

CHAPTER XI.

LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION.

Khālsa AND ZAMINDARIS.

FOR the purposes of land revenue administration the district is divided into two tracts, viz., the *khālsa* and the zamīndāris. *Khālsa* is a convenient term used to indicate land which neither belongs to a Feudatory State or a feudal zamīndāri, nor is included in a Government reserved forest. Briefly, it means land held by village headmen direct from Government. The area of the *khālsa* in Sambalpur is 1,570 square miles, of which 827 square miles are in the Bargarh *tahsīl* and 743 square miles in the Sambalpur *tahsīl*. The zamīndāris are tracts held by intermediary proprietors having a feudal status entirely different from that of zamīndārs in Bengal. A fuller description of the status of the Sambalpur zamīndār will be given later in this chapter, and it will be sufficient to state here that he holds his land on the payment of a feudal tribute called *takoli*, and that he stands halfway between the feudatory chiefs whose territory is not British and the ordinary proprietors of villages in British districts.

There are 16 zamīndāris in the district with a total area of 1,791 square miles, including 1,416 square miles of surveyed village lands and 375 square miles of unsurveyed forests. The marginal statement shows the names and areas of the different zamīndāris, of which Borāsāmbar lies to the extreme south-west of the district, those numbered 2-9 in the Bargarh plain, and the remainder in the Sambalpur *tahsīl*. Most of the estates are situated in the hilly tracts which fringe the open plain of the *khālsa*, but several,

Zamīndāris.	Square miles.	Zamīndāris.	Square miles.
1. Borāsāmbar ...	841	9. Pātkulandā ...	6
2. Barpāli ...	98	10. Kolābirā ...	278
3. Bijepur ...	83	11. Rāmpur ...	149
4. Ghes ...	40	12. Rājpur ...	36
5. Bheran ...	33	13. Kodābagā ...	29
6. Kharsal ...	28	14. Machidā ...	10
7. Pahārsirgirā ...	17	15. Lairā ...	41
8. Mandomahāl ...	7	16. Loisingh ...	95

notably Barpāli and Bijepur, occupy portions of the best cultivated area in the district; while the other estates in Bargarh lie in or close to the plain and are almost as closely cultivated as the neighbouring *khālsa* tract. They differ widely in importance, Pātkulandā having an area of only 6 square miles and consisting of a few villages, whereas Borāsāmbar has an area of 841 square miles and was once one of the Garhjāt States, most of which are now feudatory.

REVENUE HISTORY OF THE *Khālsa*.

Under native rule the revenue of the Rājās was obtained from the customary rents and revenues payable in the *khālsa* or State lands, from the quit-rents paid by certain privileged estates, and from the tribute paid by feudal zamīndārs. In the *khālsa* the village headmen, called *gaontiās*, were responsible for the payment of a lump sum assessed on the village for a period of years according to a lease which was periodically revised and renewed. The amount of the assessment was recovered from the village cultivators, and the headmen were remunerated by holding part of the village area free of revenue. The headmen were occasionally ejected for default in the payment of revenue; and the grant of a new lease was often made an opportunity for imposing a fee (*nazarāna*), which the *gaontiā* paid in great part from his own profits, and did not recover from the cultivators. The cultivators were seldom ejected except for default in the payment of revenue, but they rendered to their *gaontiās* a variety of miscellaneous services known as *bethī begāri*.

Not all the land, however, was administered under this system, for it was the policy of the native rulers to avoid direct management of the outlying parts of the district. They, therefore, not only left undisturbed those Gond and Binjhāl chieftains whom they found in possession, but assigned some tracts in perpetuity to cadets of the Rājā's family, and sometimes farmed more remote tracts for terms of years. Certain of the zamīndārs were locally known by the title of *garhtiā*, *i.e.*, literally a fort-holder, and this title was also given to men whose position was merely that of revenue-farmers. Many villages were, moreover, alienated by means of other grants, such as *birtiā*, by which the post of *gaontiā* of a village was held by a family of Brāhmans, who divided the village lands among themselves, often in very minute shares. Other villages were assigned for the maintenance of Brāhmans and temples, being known as *debottar* and *brahmottar;* or large grants called *sāsan* were made, *i.e.*, a tract of land was given out in shares to different families of Brāhmans. Lastly, there were so-called *kumārī* grants, where villages were held rent-free by members of the Rājā's

family as a maintenance assignment. In these circumstances, it is not surprising that the land revenue of the *khālsa* was small, amounting in 1849, when Sambalpur was finally annexed by the British, to only one lakh of rupees, nearly a quarter of which was alienated.

When the British assumed the administration, a number of short-term settlements were made, and several sweeping changes were carried out. The levy of *nazarāna* was discontinued, a large proportion of the revenue assignments were summarily resumed, and all holders of *brahmottar* and *debottar* grants were made liable to pay half the revenue assessable. In 1857 the Mutiny broke out, and for five years the country was infested by bands of marauders under Surendra Sāi, who was joined by nine at least of the zamīndārs. These disturbances had an important effect on the revenue administration of the district; for it was owing to them that the *gaontiās*, or hereditary managers and rent collectors of villages, were not given proprietary rights, in accordance with a promise made in 1862 on the transfer of the district to the Central Provinces. In that year a proclamation was issued notifying that there would be a new settlement, which would hold good for 20 or 30 years, so as to encourage the *gaontiās* to improve their villages, and that proprietary rights would be conferred on all *gaontiās* who, on enquiry, might be found entitled to them. All *gaontiās* on whom such proprietary rights were conferred would be owners of their villages, and would have a heritable and transferable right in them. This proclamation was confirmed by the Chief Commissioner, Sir Richard Temple, in 1863.

The protracted disturbances caused by the adherents of Surendra Sāi, however, prevented any real progress being made with the survey, and in the meantime the local officers represented that the system of settlement followed in other districts was not suited to the circumstances of Sambalpur. Final orders were issued in 1872, under which the policy of Sir Richard Temple was completely changed, and it was decided that the district should be settled on an entirely different system to that followed elsewhere. The basis of this system was the maintenance, as far as possible, of the existing relations of the *gaontiās* to their ryots and to the Government. The *gaontiās* were practically to remain *thikādārs* or farmers of their villages. The ryots were secured in the possession of their holdings, without rights of transfer so long as they paid the Government revenue assessed on their land, the whole of the revenue paid by them being collected and rendered to Government by the *gaontiās*. The

latter were given proprietary rights in their *bhogrā* or home-farm lands, and were allowed to hold them free of revenue up to a maximum (in ordinary cases) of one-fourth of the revenue paid by their ryots. The custom under which they were entitled to demand unpaid labour (*bethī begāri*) from the ryots at certain times was left intact, and they were also permitted to enjoy the rental on new lands broken up during the currency of the settlement, subject to a stipulation regarding the rates to be charged.

The settlement conducted on these principles was concluded by Mr. A. M. Russell in 1876 and was sanctioned for a term of 12 years. Its effect was to raise the annual rental of the *khālsa* villages from Rs. 89,797 to Rs. 1,10,414, giving an average rent-rate of 6 annas per acre; but it appears from an estimate of the cultivated area that the rental actually imposed was not more than 5 annas per acre. The assessment was admittedly light, but cultivation was only beginning to recover from the anarchy caused by Surendra Sāi's rebellion, and the people, though accustomed to contribute to the State large amounts of grain and labour, were little accustomed to the use of cash and found a rent of a few rupees not always easy to raise.

On the expiry of this settlement, the district was again settled by Mr. Nethersole between 1885 and 1889, and the assessment of the *khālsa* was raised to Rs. 1,52,406, giving an average rental of annas 5-5 per acre. There were several noticeable features about this, the first regular settlement of Sambalpur. For the first time a cadastral survey of the *khālsa* was carried out, the reassessment of the land revenue being conducted on *ryotwāri* principles. The assessments, moreover, were based on the soil unit system described in Chapter VIII. The *gaontiās* were now allowed, in cash or in rental value, a sum equal to a fourth of the revenue paid by the ryots. At the same time, limitations were placed on the demand of *gaontiās* for *bethī begāri* or free labour; and it was provided that ryots might commute at reasonable rates. The maximum demandable from each ryot was limited to 2 ploughs with bullocks and men for one day and to two field labourers for one day, while the commutation rates were fixed at 4 annas for bullocks and men and 1½ anna for a labourer. Steps were also taken to constitute village fuel and fodder reserves, an area being set apart for this purpose in most villages from the uncultivated lands constituting the property of Government.

The settlement of 1885-89 was, owing to the low incidence of the rents imposed, sanctioned for a term of 14 years and expired

in 1902-03. A resettlement was commenced in 1902 and carried to completion in 1906 by Mr. F. Dewar, I.C.S. The result has been to increase the net revenue of the *khālsa* area to Rs. 1,71,992 for a period of 20 years, that being the term fixed for the currency of the settlement. The revenue paid by the zamīndāris is Rs. 25,720, and the total amount realizable is, therefore, only Rs. 1,97,712. The gross revenue of the district, as now constituted, including that retained by assignees, is, however, Rs. 2,23,879, so that over one-tenth of the revenue is intercepted by zamīndārs, *tālukdārs* and other assignees.

INCIDENCE OF REVENUE.

Considering the area of the district, the amount obtained by Government in the form of land revenue is small, a result due to the alienations made before it came under British rule and also in the early days of British administration. "From 1817 to 1849," writes Mr. Dewar, "the throne was held by three Rājās and a Rānī. Throughout this period, although British influence prevented Marāthā aggression, there was constant internecine strife between the recognized rulers and pretenders to the Rāj. These disturbances were at their worst under the Rānī Mohan Kumārī Devī, who succeeded in 1827. To quell rebellion and to reward her adherents, she alienated much of the land revenue of the State, and in excessive piety also parted with much land to priests and temples. Religious grants had been common enough before her accession, but they were never before so lavish. Under the last Rājā, Nārāyan Singh, disturbances continued, and with them continued the alienation of estates. Later still, after the Surendra Sāi rebellion, the British Government dealt very leniently with the aboriginal chiefs who had taken arms, and restored them to their estates. Further alienations were necessary to reward its own adherents. These grants have very greatly complicated land tenures and have reduced the revenue of Government."

MAINTENANCE OF

For the maintenance of the records there is a staff called the Land Records Staff, controlled by a native Superintendent under the Deputy Commissioner, and consisting of two grades of officials, viz., revenue inspectors and *patwāris*. The *patwāri* is the village surveyor and accountant, and his office is an ancient one, but he is now a paid and trained Government servant, instead of being a dependent of the landowner as formerly. There are 10 revenue inspectors, each in charge of a number of *patwāris'* circles, of which there are 216 in the district; and their duties consist in training the *patwāris* in surveying and the preparation of the annual returns. In each village a *gaontiā*, called the *lambardār gaontiā* (*lambardār* being a corruption of the

English word "number") is responsible for the collection and payment of the Government revenue. He is appointed by the Deputy Commissioner, and is charged with the management of the village, in which he is assisted by a *panchāyat* consisting of four ryots of the village elected by their fellow ryots.

REVENUE HISTORY OF THE ZAMINDARIS.

The feudal tenures called zamīndāris appear to have originated in several ways. Ten, viz., Kolābirā, Machidā, Kodābagā, Lairā, Loisingh, Kharsal, Pahārsirgirā, Bheran, Pātkulandā and Mandomahāl, are owned by Gonds and are believed to represent fragments of the ancient Gond Rāj, which once extended over a large area in the Central Provinces. The smallest of them, Pātkulandā, appears to have been created by an assignment of part of the Bheran zamīndāri to a younger brother. Two, Borāsāmbar and Ghes, are owned by Binjhāls, and the fact that the zamīndār of Borāsāmbar gives the *tikā* to the Rājā of Pātnā on his accession appears to show that his possession of the country dates back to an ancient period. Ghes was originally an appanage of Borāsāmbar, having been formed by partition or assignment. The zamīndāris of Rājpur and Barpāli are held by Chauhān Rājputs, offshoots of the family of the Rājā of Sambalpur, from which the country escheated to British rule. The zamīndāri of Bijepur, which is held by a Kultā, was created in 1841 by the Rājā of Sambalpur in favour of one Gopī Kultā for loyal service.

Whatever their origin may have been, it appears that before the district came under direct British administration, while it was under the rule of the Rājās of Sambalpur, the zamīndāris were service tenures held on payment of a small tribute called *takoli*, subject to the proviso that the proprietors were bound to render military service when called upon. When the district escheated to the British, those zamīndārs who held in perpetuity continued in the enjoyment of their tenures on payment of their existing *takoli* and were directed to perform police duties instead of rendering military service. During the rebellion of Surendra Sāi (1857-62) nine of the zamīndāris, viz., Kolābirā, Kodābagā, Ghes, Pahārsigirā, Pātkulandā, Rāmpur, Bheran, Kharsal, and Mandomahāl, were confiscated in consequence of their proprietors having revolted, but were restored on the proclamation of amnesty in 1859.

When the settlement of 1876 was undertaken, it was decided that the circumstances of each estate should be considered separately and the assessment of each fixed with regard to its previous history and present condition. A summary enquiry was accordingly made into the circumstances of each zamīndāri,

and its payments to Government were readjusted. No *sanads* were given, as it was ruled by the Chief Commissioner that it was desirable to make detailed enquiries into subordinate rights in these estates, and in the absence of such enquiries it was impossible to define the relations of the zamīndārs with their *gaontiās* and ryots. At the next settlement (1885-89) the assessment was based on existing assets, and the zamīndārs were left to extract what they could in the way of rent enhancement from their tenants until the next settlement, by which time it was expected that the resurvey in progress would be completed. It was also ruled that no *sanad* should be given, but that a *wājib-ul-arz* or village administration paper should be framed in two parts, the first defining the zamīndār's rights and liabilities as against Government, and the second the relations between himself and his tenants. At the last settlement concluded in 1906 the rents and revenues of villages were fully revised, while the *takoli* payments were raised to Rs. 25,720.

These payments have gradually increased owing to the resumption by Government of the semi-independent powers formerly exercised by the zamīndārs. When the district escheated to the British, the zamīndārs were responsible for the police administration in their estates, and at the settlement of 1876 police powers were nominally left to them, their *takolis* being fixed at an exceptionally low rate, in consideration of services rendered. Their services, however, had become more and more nominal from year to year, especially in the smaller estates which were surrounded by *khālsa* villages; and it was felt to be an anomaly that they should be isolated from the ordinary police arrangements of the district. Accordingly, in 1888, Government, availing itself of the opportunity afforded by the revision of settlement, resumed the police administration in 12 of the smaller estates, viz., Ghes, Bheran, Kharsal, Pahārsirgirā, Pātkulandā, Mandomahāl, Rājpur, Loisingh, Lairā, Machidā, Kodābagā and Rāmpur. The increased expenditure entailed by the employment of district police was at the same time recouped by a rateable increase of the zamīndār's *takoli*. Four of the larger and more important estates, viz., Borāsāmbar, Barpāli, Bijepur and Kolābirā, were excluded from these arrangements, owing mainly to their remoteness and to the difficulty and cost of extending the ordinary police system to them. In 1890, however, the ordinary police jurisdiction was extended to Borāsāmbar, then under the management of the Court of Wards, the cost being added to the land revenue *takoli;* and in 1892 the same measure was carried out in the case of the remaining zamīndāris. Excise

income was still enjoyed by the zamīndār of the Borāsāmbar estate, but this arrangement having been ruled by the Government of India to be in conflict with the general law, steps were taken to resume the excise administration on the basis of an equitable compensation. With a view, however, to mitigating the blow to the dignity of the zamīndār, involved by the withdrawal of this source of income, the Chief Commissioner granted him a farm of excise arrangements. The zamīndārs were allowed to retain, and still retain, the management of the forests on their estates, and, as explained in Chapter V, pay revenue for them.

As regards the present position of the zamīndārs and the way in which the *takolis* have been raised owing to the resumption of their powers, the following remarks of the Settlement Officer may be quoted. "So long as the zamīndārs exercised semi-independent powers within their estates, controlled their own police and saved Government part of the expense of administration, their *takoli* payments were merely nominal. In the larger and more remote estates, although since last settlement many of the deputed powers have been resumed, zamīndārs who act as magistrates, and superintend the maintenance of schools, roads and ferries, still have important functions. But they have not now so strong a ground for claiming exceptionally light assessment. In 1889 the administration aimed at imposing on them actual *takoli* payments of from 33 to 50 per cent. of their *kāmil-jamā*, but that aim was not closely reached. At this revision I have endeavoured, while dealing separately with the circumstances of each zamīndār and of each estate, to impose ordinarily an actual payment of not less than 40 per cent. of the full *kāmil-jamā* or proprietary assessment. The direct *takoli* payments of Rs. 15,500 fixed at settlement have since been raised by adjustment of the expenses of police management to Rs. 18,563, and have now again been raised by 37 per cent. The increase in the cess payments on a doubled *kāmil-jamā* is also large. On the other hand, the net revenues of the zamīndārs, after meeting these payments, are increased by this revision and its first systematic valuation of the land from Rs. 53,309 to Rs. 76,711. These incomes it will now be possible for the zamīndārs to add only slightly to during the terms of settlement, and out of these they will have to maintain revenue establishments; but the amounts are sufficient to maintain them in adequate dignity, and they are, of course, very largely supplemented by the profits of direct agriculture of home-farms."

The *kāmil-jamā*, it may be explained, is the full assessment which the zamīndār would pay if he had no feudal status, but

held as an ordinary proprietor, and is only of importance to him because on it are calculated the cesses due from the estate. The land and forest assets of the sixteen estates now amount to Rs. 1,21,826, and on this sum full proprietary assessments amounting to Rs. 70,970 or 58 per cent. of the total valuation have been fixed.

LAND TENURES.

The following account of the land tenures of the district is extracted, with some condensation, from Mr. Dewar's Settlement Report, in which it is explained that they have in some cases only recently crystallized, or are still crystallizing, into legal existence; and that the definitions given are based on executive orders which have been more or less tacitly accepted by the people, and on a very few judicial rulings, but depend largely upon accepted custom. The proprietary tenures are six in number, viz., (1) zamīndāri, (2) *mālguzāri*, (3) *gaontiāhi*, (4) *bhogrā-bhogi*, (5) *mālik-makbūza*, and (6) proprietorship of a *brahmottar* plot.

Status of zamīndārs.

The zamīndār of Sambalpur stands halfway between the chief of a Feudatory State, who pays tribute to the British Government, and the ordinary proprietor of a *khālsa* village, who pays a partition of his assets as land revenue. His tenure is not laid down in any Act, but is expressed in the *wājib-ul-arz*, or administration paper, accepted by him at each settlement, which is amplified, where its terms are doubtful, by the definite orders of Government. Briefly, the legal status of the feudal zamīndārs is that they are proprietors of estates which are impartible and non-transferable except to heirs, preferably the nearest legitimate male heirs, who are approved by Government. Each estate is held by the zamīndār only on terms, and he may be dispossessed in case of continued gross mismanagement. But no such dispossession has actually occurred in Sambalpur, even after many of the zamīndārs took arms against the British Government in 1857. On the other hand, the right of the executive Government to determine succession has been enforced, and the impartibility of estates has been insisted upon. No person other than the zamīndār has been recognized as a proprietor of land within a zamīndāri or has successfully contested his claim to proprietorship. The one exception to this rule is that of the sub-zamīndār of Garh Loisingh, locally known as the zamīndār of Jujumāra. In this case a younger branch of the zamīndār's family established itself separately by clearing land and settling villages in the Loisingh hills, and was recognized at the settlement of 1885-89 as having sub-proprietary rights. Besides ordinary headmen or lessees, there are in the

zamīndāri estates many *muāfidārs* or assignees, relatives or former servants of the zamīndār, who have enjoyed long uninterrupted possession, but they have not been recognized as proprietors or proved their claims to be proprietors.

Though nominally at liberty to manage their own villages as proprietors, the zamīndārs now enjoy this right only in a curtailed form. It was the former custom of a zamīndār to receive in annual payment only the rents of the tenants, which were handed over in cash by the lessee (*thikādār*). The latter made large profits from his home-farm, always the best land in the village, which was largely cultivated for him by the free labour of tenants. His profits were out of proportion to the annual lease-payments, but at each renewal of his lease he had to pay a considerable sum, usually as a renewal fee (*nazarāna*). This system led to abuse, for some indebted zamīndārs enhanced the *nazarānas* excessively, and ousted aboriginal lessees freely in favour of rich Hindu bidders. In 1888 legislative action was taken to protect the lessees, a status of protection being granted to all who could prove long possession and fair improvement of the land. The tenure was to be heritable and not transferable, and the annual payment was to be determinable by a revenue officer. The conditions of this tenure were repeated in the amended Land Revenue Act of 1898, and this action has prevented zamīndārs from ousting the protected lessees and from increasing their payments unduly. **Lessees in zamīndāris.**

In most of the estates many villages are held free of revenue by persons who are either relations of the zamīndār or former servants. Usually no occasion now exists for rendering that class of service in return for which enjoyment of the villages was originally granted, and the zamīndārs naturally desire to resume the grants, but the question has not been tested in the Courts. At the last settlement amicable arrangements were sometimes made, the compromise most usually effected being that the assignees should continue to hold free of revenue as against the zamīndār, in so far as his own income was concerned, but should pay a proportionate share of the payment made by the zamīndār to Government. **Assignees in zamīndāris.**

The *mālguzārs* of Sambalpur consist of certain estate-holders who, for services rendered to the native rulers or to the British Government, held their estates revenue-free, or paid only nominal quit-rents, while other such estates were assigned as religious grants to Brāhmans at the time of solar eclipses or on other occasions. The occupants were usually able to show grant deeds, the wording of which was held to establish their claim to a full **_Mālguzāri_ tenure.**

proprietary tenure, and were accordingly recognized by the Government of India as proprietors in 1892. The orders then passed have had the effect of giving full proprietorship to the *mālguzārs* in villages held by them directly. In villages held by *gaontiās* under them they have, so long as the *gaontiāhi* rights intervene, only a latent proprietary interest; and it has been decided, by orders passed in 1904, that the *gaontiās* shall pay the usual cesses on their home-farm valuations, and that the *mālguzārs* shall make up the difference between this and the Government demand out of their own pockets.

Gaontiāhi tenure.

Enquiry has shown that, under the rule of the Rājās of Sambalpur, *gaontiās* or village headmen had no proprietary rights in their villages, and that though they claimed the right of hereditary succession, their claim had never been recognized; that they held on short term leases, to the renewal of which they had no intrinsic right; that on their renewal heavy *nazarāna* fees were levied; and that cases not infrequently occurred in which a *gaontiā* of long standing was ousted from his village to make room for a man who outbid him in the offer of *nazarāna*. But although no legal right on the part of *gaontiā* to his village was ever recognized, he had, according to the notions of the people, a strong moral claim to remain in possession, so long as he paid the revenue assessed on it; and no native Government could afford to disregard this claim generally and to oust *gaontiās* wholesale. As already stated, soon after the British annexation, it was decided that the *gaontiās* should be given proprietary rights in their villages, but owing to the disturbances which followed in the wake of the Mutiny, and the consequent delay in the resettlement of the district, the policy of converting village headmen into proprietors began to be seriously doubted. The original orders were then considerably modified, and the village farmers were left in that position, but were granted proprietary rights in their home-farms.

The rights habitually exercised by a *gaontiā* and sanctioned by the ordinary practice of the civil courts are :—(1) proprietorship and free right of alienation of the home-farm; (2) the right of management over the whole village, and of undisturbed possession of it, so long as the Government revenue demand is fully and promptly paid; (3) the right of alienating the whole village or a share in the village, if accompanied by a transfer of home-farm land.

Just as there are in proprietary villages superior and inferior proprietors, so there are superior and inferior (*shikmī*) *gaontiās*. The rights of the latter are exactly the same as those of ordinary

gaontiās, except that they pay their village assessment to the superior *gaontiā* instead of to Government, and that usually they also pay him *mālikānā*, or a sum which represents a share in the cultivating profits of the home-farms. In 229 *khālsa* villages dual rights of *gaontiāship* are exercised, and in all cases it is the inferior *gaontiā* who is the real village manager, and who bears the responsibility of rent collection.

Though the legal status of the *goantiā* in the *khālsa* area is entirely different from that of a *mālguzār*, the practical differences are not very great. In some ways the *mālguzār* has the better of the *gaontiā*. The former, as proprietor of his waste land, may sell timber; the *gaontiā* may not, as he is only a trustee on behalf of Government, responsible that the village forests are used for village needs. The assessment paid by the *gaontiā* is also heavier than that of the *mālguzār*. The latter pays from 45 to 60 per cent. of the total valuation of his village. The *gaontiā* receives, in revenue-free home-farm land or in cash, only 25 per cent. of the rents paid by ryots. The village service land is held free of revenue, and the percentage actually paid by the *gaontiā* on the total valuation of his village is usually about 76 per cent. Owing to the lightness of assessments in Sambalpur, this difference is not yet important, and in any case it is partly counterbalanced by the fact that the *gaontiā* has no assessment to pay on his miscellaneous receipts and that he pays only about half of the cess taken from the *mālguzār*. The rates of the cesses do not differ, but the *gaontiā* pays them on the valuation of his home-farm, while the *mālguzār* pays on his assessed revenue, or, in revenue-free villages, on his *kāmil-jamā*.

Bhogrā-bhogi tenure.

The tenure called *bhogrā-bhogī* connotes proprietary rights exercised in small parcels of land, and not in entire villages. The usual history of the tenure is that, at the private partition of *khālsa* villages among various branches of a *gaontiāhi* family, the senior branches divided among themselves the principal part of the home-farm and took over all the management of the village. They allotted to junior or illegitimate branches plots of home-farm land, the understanding being that these recipients relinquished all claim to share in village management, and that, on the other side, the *gaontiās* relinquished all right to interfere in the disposal of the *bhogrā-bhogī* plot. The right of transfer of such plots has been frequently exercised.

Mālik-makbūza tenure.

Mālik-makbūza is a name given to *bhogrā-bhogī* lands held by *mālguzārs*. The proprietor of such plots can sublet without creating occupancy rights and has the same independent right of

transfer as the proprietor of *bhogrā-bhogī* land. The number of such tenures is very small.

Brahmottar lands.

Brahmottar lands consist of plots granted in perpetuity to Brāhmans and others. It has been ruled that the tenure is a proprietary one, and that the holders are entitled, on the resumption of the revenue, to have a proprietary sub-settlement made with them. Their land not being village home-farm, every tenant holding from them becomes by the payment of rent an occupancy tenant.

Debottar lands.

The incidents of *brahmottar* tenures are distinct from those of *debottar* tenures, *i.e.*, plots set aside under native rule for the support of temples. The latter, having been given to no individual person, have been held to be non-proprietary. When their revenues are resumed, which usually occurs when the priests of a temple alienate the land, the transferee is assessed merely as an occupancy tenant, and his rent is included in the ryotī payments of the village.

Tenancy rights.

With the exception of tenants in possession of service holdings and those servants of zamīndārs who hold tenancy land in return for service, all tenants, not being sub-tenants, of land which is not home-farm, have occupancy rights. But there is a legal distinction between the ryot of an ordinary *gaontiāhi khālsa* village and the occupancy tenant in one of the zamīndāri or *mālguzāri* estates. The former is a ryot of Government, as well as an occupancy tenant of the landlord *gaontiā*. The latter, even if he holds in a *gaontiāhi* village, is merely an occupancy tenant. Another practical distinction is that the tenant of a proprietary estate does not pay the road, school and post office cesses which fall on the Government ryot. Tenants, again, in purely *ryotwāri* villages, of which there are seventeen in the district, are in a different position. Most of these villages are mere jungle clearings, which have, at various recent dates, been settled with managers who are not *gaontiās*, or proprietors of their holdings, and get merely a drawback on the amount of village rental collected. The ryots of these villages are Government ryots only, not occupancy tenants of a landlord.

Service holdings.

Most of the service holdings are in the possession of the village watchmen, *i.e.*, the *jhānkar* and the Gāndā. The incidents of these tenures will be described in the next chapter under the head of "Village Police," and it will suffice here to say that the land held by them is exempted by Government from assessment up to a maximum valuation of one-eighth of the ryotī rental paid by the village. Other service holdings are those of the *negi* or clerk, *kumhār* or potter, *lohār* or smith, *narihā* or herdsman

and water-carrier, *bhandâri* or barber, and *dhobâ* or washerman. There are now few *negi* holdings, but the other village servants mentioned are found in most of the larger and older villages. The areas held by them are small and are free from assessment during the term of the settlement.

The ordinary forms of sub-tenancy in both ryotī and *bhogrā* land are (1) usufructuary mortgages, (2) holdings for two or three years on *chirol*, *i.e.*, with the sub-rent paid in full in advance, (3) holdings on *bhāgel* terms, by which half of the gross produce is handed over to the lessor, (4) service sub-tenancies, and (5) some few cases of land given out on an annual cash sub-rent. According to the settlement statistics, in the *khālsa* area 12,614 acres are sublet on *chirol* or by annual sub-lease for payments aggregating Rs. 18,780 per annum. The rate is Re. 1-8 per acre, or 4½ times the average rate of Government rent. In all, 9,663 acres are held by usufructuary mortgages in lieu of interest (at a usual rate of 25 per cent.) amounting to Rs. 38,950, or Rs. 4 per acre. The land sublet for cash is usually of the poorest class, and it is not the best land that is mortgaged. Among other sub-tenants may be mentioned the sub-tenants of *bhogrā* land, who have now secured what is practically an occupancy right by agreement with the *gaontiās*, and the co-sharers of *jhānkars*, who generally belong to branches of the *jhānkar's* family and are in possession of part of his service holding as sub-tenants. Sub-tenancies.

The following account by Mr. Dewar of the relations of landlords and tenants is of interest. "The patriarchal relation of the *gaontiā* or headman towards the ryots is in its essentials still maintained, and there is little direct opposition between landlords and tenants as such, except in the comparatively rare cases where a rich man has acquired several villages and attempts to manage them all without the intervention of resident inferior *gaontiās*. *Gaontiās* in general have shown great moderation in the use of their power under section 46 of the revised Tenancy Act. In the great majority of cases, they have been willing to accept a comparatively small percentage of the purchase-money when transfers occur between ryots, and have been restrained by public opinion and traditional custom from attempting to enforce their claim in full to the land transferred. They have, indeed, of late years joined to some extent in the movement by which the lower classes of tenants have lost their holdings or part of their holdings. No statistics were given at last settlement of the area of occupancy land held by *gaontiās* in addition to their proprietary home-farms, but from an examination of village records I have found it large only in a few tracts. They now hold in the *khā'sa* RELATIONS OF LANDLORDS AND TENANTS.

area 46,521 acres or 9 per cent. of the total ryotī land. Much of this, however, has not been acquired from tenants, but has been newly broken from waste. In any case, the extension is not a large one, and the land is almost invariably cultivated directly and not sublet. I am inclined to attribute these satisfactory relations to the balance maintained between the powers of the *gaontiās* and those of the ryotī body. In almost every case the former have home-farms large enough to support large families and yet provide ample savings. But in rice-country it is difficult to cultivate large areas directly, unless a cheap and ample supply of labour is forthcoming at critical seasons. In rural tracts there is no such supply, and the landlords have to depend on the free labour provided by ryots. If the latter have grievances in common, they can withhold or at least delay their help, and the commutation money which the *gaontiās* can afterwards recover by expensive litigation is poor compensation for the loss of a harvest.

"That it is lack of power rather than of will which restrains landlords from encroaching on the tenancy area is proved by the zeal they have shown in re-extending direct hold over their home-farms. These, as I have noted, are large. In the last generation it was not unusual for a *gaontiā* with a small family and no ready access to profitable markets to give out plots of his home-farm on perpetual leases. For these he took large lump sums and fixed very light annual rents. Since the rise of prices every such case has been scrutinized, most of them have been brought before the Civil Courts, and, by means not always scrupulous, possession of much of the alienated land has been resumed.

"The chief subjects of village disputes have for some years been water-rights and rights in the common land which formerly grew sugarcane. These are closely related. It is owing to the rise in rice-profits that irrigation tanks are not now habitually reserved for sugarcane irrigation on common land during the hot weather. In this respect, tenants as a body have, I think, suffered by the change of custom. They get for their rice crop much less water than goes to the nearer land of the *gaontiā*, and they now have to irrigate their cane-fields expensively from wells. The former grievance is loudly voiced in years of short rainfall. But it is a fact that the burden of maintaining the public tanks in repair has fallen more on the *gaontiā*, and that the old custom of subscription is shirked by the ryots."

Bethī begārī.

In conclusion, reference may be made to the orders passed at the last settlement regarding the system of *bethī begāri* or

free labour, which, as mentioned in Chapter III, is a perquisite of the *gaontiā*. In the course of the settlement operations each village had its arrangements fixed in detail. The number of ploughs leviable at the previous settlement was first ascertained, and the total number was used as a limit not to be exceeded. The area of the home-farm was then taken into account and a standard of one free plough to every five acres was fixed, which provided a second maximum. Finally, it was ordered that no ryot possessing one plough only should be called upon to supply more than one plough for one day. In many cases it was found possible to arrange that even the richer ryots should not contribute more than one plough annually, and that the poorer men should contribute one only every alternate year. The general result of these measures is that the pressure on the ryots has been very considerably lightened. The *gaontiās*, although they will now have to maintain more regular farm-servants than formerly, and so will lose part of their profits, are still provided with the means of cultivating large farms profitably in villages where hired daily labour and hired oxen cannot be procured.

CHAPTER XII.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.

ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGES AND STAFF.

THE district forms part of the Orissa Division and is in charge of a Deputy Commissioner. For general administrative purposes it is divided into two subdivisions or *tahsīls* with headquarters at Sambalpur and Bargarh. The Sambalpur *tahsīl* is under the direct control of the Deputy Commissioner, who is usually assisted by a staff of three Deputy Collectors and two Sub-Deputy Collectors. One of the Deputy Collectors is appointed Subdivisional Officer, though he is not formally gazetted as such; and the Sub-Deputy Collectors are designated *Tahsīldār* and Additional *Tahsīldār*. The Bargarh *tahsīl* is in charge of a Subdivisional Officer, who is one of the Deputy Collectors stationed at Sambalpur, assisted by a Sub-Deputy Collector designated *Tahsīldār*. For the administration of justice the district is included within the jurisdiction of the District and Sessions Judge of Cuttack; and the civil judicial staff consists of a Sub-Judge and one Munsif at Sambalpur and one Munsif at Bargarh. The reserved forests constitute a Forest Division in charge of an Extra Assistant Conservator of Forests, and there is also a Public Works Department Division under an Executive Engineer. The educational inspecting agency is supervised by an Assistant Inspector of Schools, who is also Assistant Inspector for the district of Angul and Agency Inspector for the Garhjāt States.

Until comparatively recent years the zamīndārs, who have a quasi-feudal status, controlled their own police, managed their own excise system and pounds, and formerly also received half of the *pāndhri*, a form of income-tax. In the interests of uniform and consistent administration these powers have been taken from the zamīndārs, compensation being given for the resultant loss of income, but they still manage ferries and forests and can retain unclaimed property in their estates.

REVENUE.

The collections of revenue, under the main heads, aggregated Rs. 4,57,380 in 1907-08, including Rs. 2,27,827 from land revenue, Rs. 1,65,502 from excise, Rs. 55,135 from stamps, and Rs. 8,916 from income-tax. Statistics for former years are not

given, as the district had a much larger area prior to October 1905.

Land revenue.

The current demand of land revenue in 1907-08 was Rs. 2,28,450 payable by 975 estates. Altogether Rs. 2,27,320 were due from 956 temporarily-settled estates and Rs. 1,130 from 19 estates held direct by Government.

Excise.

Next to land revenue the most important source of income is excise, the receipts from which increased from Rs. 1,07,300 in 1901-02 to Rs. 1,65,502 in 1907-08, in spite of the area of the district being reduced by 1,136 square miles and the population by 190,706 persons. Still, the incidence of consumption is not great, as compared with many other districts, the net excise revenue in the year last named being Rs. 2,303 per 10,000 of the population as against Rs. 3,206 for the whole of Bengal. Nearly the whole of the receipts are obtained from the sale of opium and country spirits.

Opium.

Opium alone accounts for nearly half of the revenue, the receipts from duty and license fees being Rs. 79,400, representing a revenue of Rs. 1,242 per 10,000 of the population—a proportion higher than in any district in Bengal except Balasore and Angul. The drug was sold in 1907-08 at 39 shops, and there was one shop for every 16,384 persons.

Country spirit.

Until 1907-08 the sale and manufacture of country spirit distilled from the flower of the *mahuā* tree (*Bassia latifolia*) were conducted under what is known as the dual system, *i.e.*, the distillery system (now replaced by the contract supply system) was in force in the centre and the outstill system in the remainder of the district. The distillery system was introduced in a small part of the Sambalpur *tahsīl* in 1897-98, and was extended to a portion of the Bargarh *tahsīl* in 1902-03. In 1905-06 a revision of the distillery area was carried into effect, and it was extended over 836 square miles, viz., 397 square miles in the Sambalpur *tahsīl* and 439 square miles in the Bargarh *tahsīl*. In this area the contract supply system was introduced in 1907-08, *i.e.*, the exclusive right to supply country spirit to licensed retail vendors is leased to a contractor.

The outstill system, which is in force in the greater part of the district, differs materially from the outstill system in force in other districts of Bengal. Suitable sites for liquor shops having been selected, the shops are grouped in circles, and one outstill is allowed for each circle. The right of working the still and of selling its outturn in the shops of the circle is then auctioned by the Deputy Commissioner. What is actually sold is the outstill and its branch shops, and not the outstill circle; and the bringing

of outstill liquor from one circle to another does not constitute any offence. This is practically a farming system, the shops licensed for the sale of liquor being farmed in circles with the right of distillation attached to one particular shop. Most of the main outstills have one to three branch shops attached to each, whereas branch shops are rare elsewhere in Bengal, the distinguishing feature of the outstill system being the limitation to a particular locality of the joint right of distillation and sale under each contract.

Even apart from the branch shops, the number of liquor shops in the outstill area is large, owing to the peculiar circumstances of the district. The nature o" the country, a large portion of which is hilly and under forest, the bundance of *mahuā* trees, the difficulty of communication, are all factors which necessitate the maintenance of a large number of liquor shops in proportion to the population, so that liquor may be accessible to the aboriginal consumers, many of whose villages are situated deep in the jungle, and that the temptation to resort to illicit practices may be minimized. It has been felt, however, that the number of liquor shops has hitherto been excessive, and it has consequently been decided to reduce their number so that there may be about one shop for every 20 square miles instead of 13 square miles as formerly. This change is gradually being effected, and the system is being brought into line with that of the rest of Bengal by the abolition of some branch shops and the conversion of others into outstills.

The consumers of country spirit are mainly aboriginals, who relish it after a day's hard labour and exposure to the weather. It also plays an important part in their religious ceremonies and festivals, but except on special occasions they do not indulge in drinking to excess. All that they require is a little of a cheap but strong intoxicant; and consumers, as a rule, do not buy more than two pice worth of the spirit. In 1907-08 the sale of country spirit realized Rs. 75,000, as compared with Rs. 26,000 in 1901-02 and Rs. 48,000 in 1905-06; and there was one shop for every 2,958 persons, the population served by each shop being smaller than in any other district in Bengal, for which the average was 16,690 persons.

Hemp drugs.

Nearly the whole of the remainder of the excise revenue is derived from the duty and license fees on *gānja*, *i.e.*, the dried flowering tops of the cultivated female hemp plant (*Cannabis indica*) and the resinous exudation on them. Before April 1906 the *gānja* consumed in the district was Khandwā *gānja*, so called because it is grown in the Khandwā *tahsīl* in the Nimār district

of the Central Provinces. In that year Rājshāhi (locally called Bāluchar) *gānja*, which is much more powerful, was introduced; but from April 1907 Government has reverted to the old method of supplying only the less potent Khandwā drug, the duty on which has been fixed at Rs. 5 a seer. Smuggling of Garhjāt *gānja* from the neighbouring Tributary States is said to be common, and to have a serious effect on this source of revenue. The consumption of *bhāng* is insignificant.

A small amount is obtained from the sale of *tāri*, *i.e.*, the fermented juice obtained by tapping the date-palm. Tapping takes place at the close of the rains and continues till June, and the liquor is most in request in the hot weather. There are only 49 shops licensed for its sale. *Pachwai* is consumed by aboriginals or semi-aboriginals, such as Kols, Mundās, Oraons, Gonds, Gāndās and Ghāsiās, and by the Oriyā Chamārs. This is a liquor prepared from rice, which may be described as rice beer. The rice is first boiled and then dried, and after it has been mixed with some powdered *rannu*, is put into an earthen pot and allowed to stand, for three days in summer and four days in winter, till it ferments thoroughly. It is preferred by the aborigines to the country spirit obtained by distillation from the *mahuā* flower, but few drink it every day or to excess. At certain festivals, however, they get excessively drunk, some of them consuming as much as six seers a day. Such festivals are Karma or Nuākhiā in Bhādra, Dasaharā day in Aswin, Dewāli in Aswin or Kārtik, and Holi in Phāgun. *Pachwai* is also made for certain domestic ceremonies, *e.g.*, births, marriages and funerals, and for the ceremonies observed when a boy's ears are pierced for the first time. The consumption at such times varies from 20 seers to 12 maunds, according to the social position of the household and the number of guests invited. At present, *pachwai* is free from taxation, and the aborigines are allowed to brew it for household use, free of duty, but not to sell it. Another favourite liquor is a fermented drink called *sugdā*, which is prepared from *mahuā* in the same way as *pachwai* from rice.

Tāri and *pachwai*.

In concluding this sketch of excise administration in Sambalpur, a short account may be given of the system followed in the Borāsāmbar zamīndāri. Like other zamīndārs of the Central Provinces, the zamīndār of Borāsāmbar formerly exercised some of the functions of Government, including the administration of excise within the limits of his estate. In acknowledgment that they exercised these rights only as agents of Government, such zamīndārs paid a small feudal tribute called *takoli*, which bore no proportion to the amount of their income. In 1887 the

Excise system in Borāsāmbar.

Excise Commissioner suggested that the excise *takoli* should bear some relation to the income from excise; and at the same time arrangements were made with the zamīndārs to reduce the number of stills and liquor shops in their estates.

In 1892 the Government of India ruled that, as the zamīndāris formed a part of British India, the arrangement under which the zamīndārs managed their excise independently was in conflict with the law. The rights they had hitherto exercised were accordingly resumed in 1893, full compensation being paid to the zamīndārs. At the same time, the latter were offered a farm of the excise revenue of their estates, on condition of paying annually, during the currency of the existing land revenue settlement, a certain fixed sum in lieu of the *takoli*, which was remitted. This arrangement was made solely to protect the dignity of the zamīndārs, and they still retained control of the administration of their own excise, subject to the Deputy Commissioner's orders, with regard to the number and locality of shops, and to the due observance of the *khālsa* excise rules. The position of the zamīndār of Borāsāmbar under this system was that of a farmer of the revenue of country spirit under Government, the number and sites of shops being fixed by the authorities, while the zamīndār paid a certain sum to the Government and made his own terms with actual licensees.

In 1907 this system of farming was abolished, settlements being made directly with the licensees. It has also been decided to reduce the number of liquor shops in the estate, for hitherto the number has been unusually large, one shop serving an area of 9 square miles only. The circumstances of the zamīndāri, however, require that there should always be a comparatively large number of shops. The population consists mainly of Binjhāls, Bhuliās, Ghāsiās, Gonds, and Khonds, all of whom indulge more or less in drinking. The zamīndāri yields a very rich crop of fine *mahuā*, which in times of plenty is sold at 5 to 5½ maunds a rupee. The tree, indeed, flowers in almost every household, and unless there is a sufficient number of shops to meet the demand, illicit distillation would be common.

Stamps. The income from stamps is unusually small, the receipts in 1907-08 being only Rs. 55,135, including Rs. 37,148 from judicial and Rs. 17,987 from non-judicial stamps. As in other districts, almost all the receipts are obtained from the sale of court-fee stamps and impressed stamps.

Income-tax. Previous to the introduction of the Income-Tax Act in 1886, non-agricultural incomes were taxed under the Pāndhri Act (XIV of 1867), and the zamīndārs used to receive half of the tax

collected in their estates. The arrangement in force was that the tax was assessed under the Deputy Commissioner's orders but collected by the zamīndār, who received a refund of 50 per cent. for his trouble. This arrangement has been discontinued for some years, the Pāndhri Act being repealed in 1902. In 1907-08 the collections of income-tax amounted to Rs. 8,916 paid by 169 assessees. In no district in Bengal is the amount collected and the number of assessees so small—a fact which indicates the industrial and commercial backwardness of the district.

Registration.

Name.	Number of documents registered.	Receipts.	Expenditure.
		Rs.	Rs.
Sambalpur ...	299	1,567	836
Bargarh ...	228	1,033	516
Total ...	527	2,600	1,352

There are two sub-registry offices in the district situated at Sambalpur and Bargarh. The marginal statement gives the salient statistics for the year 1907.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE. Criminal justice.

The criminal courts are those of the District and Sessions Judge of Cuttack, the Deputy Commissioner and the Stipendiary Magistrates subordinate to him, the sanctioned staff consisting of three Deputy Magistrates with first class powers. There are also benches of Honorary Magistrates at Sambalpur and Bargarh, and Honorary Magistrates at Barpāli, Padampur, Bijepur and Jharsagurā. The crime of the district is usually not heavy, the commonest offences being theft, house-breaking and burglary, which are mainly committed by Gāndās. In the famine of 1900 there was an organised outbreak of dacoity on the Bāmra border, which was soon suppressed; and in 1907 there was another outbreak, which was traced to a gang of Kols.

Civil justice.

The civil courts are those of the District and Sessions Judge of Cuttack, of a Sub-Judge and a Munsif stationed at Sambalpur, and of a Munsif stationed at Bargarh. Some of the Magistrates also exercise the power of Munsifs. Civil litigation has greatly increased in recent years. Though suits for arrears of rent are few, civil suits are numerous, the number of mortgage suits and of suits for immovable property having risen considerably of late years. Suits for ejectment or for recovery of possession are common, and are mostly brought by *gaontiās* to recover from sub-tenants possession of their home-farm lands. The growth of civil litigation in recent years is due to several

causes, such as the introduction of the railway, which made every one with claims on land desirous of getting it into his own possession: the settlement operations, which caused claimants to try to obtain possession before the final announcement of the record; and last, but not least, the rise in the value of land which has taken place. Until recently not much value was set upon land. The average tenant was poor, while the landlord was content to live on his *bhogrā* land and conserve his tenantry rather than displace and absorb what was legitimately not his. The general character of litigation is petty. Among the agrarian classes the Kultās, and among the non-agricultural classes the Brāhmans, are prominent in their readiness to push their claims in court.

POLICE.

The marginal table shows the different thānas and police outposts established at present. A scheme for the revision of jurisdiction and the reduction of the number of investigating centres is under consideration. The police force in 1907 consisted of a Superintendent of Police, 4 Inspectors, 11 Sub-Inspectors, 69 Head-constables and 371 constables, of whom five were mounted constables, giving a total strength of 456, there being one policeman to every 8·4 square miles and to every 1,401 persons. The subordinate police are recruited from all over the district, with a sprinkling of men from Cuttack and Ganjām. In 1901 special measures had to be taken to change the *personnel* and improve the efficiency of the force by the importation of men from other districts.

Subdivision.	Thāna.	Outpost.
SAMBALPUR	Sambalpur City Sambalpur Sadar	Ghenupāli. Dhāmā. Sāsan.
	Jharsagurā ...	Rāmpur. Lapangā.
	Sāhāspur	Sāmāsinghā. Bāgdihi.
	Baghrā	Rāmpelā. Murā.
BARGARH	Bargarh	Barpāli. Brāhmani. Chakerkend.
	Atābirā	Remendā Kādobahāl. Bheran. Kharmundā.
	Sohelā	Sulsuliā. Bijepur.
	Ambābhonā ...	Lakhanpur.
	Padampur ...	Melchhāmundā. Dungripāli. Jagdalpur. Gaisilāt.

Village police.

The village police force in 1907 consisted of 3,131 men. There is no village police, as the term is understood in other parts of Bengal, the village watchman or *kotwār* being the subordinate of the village headman and not a police official. The duties of the watchman are to report births and deaths, the commission of offences and the residence of professional criminals; and to do this he must proceed once a week to the police post to

which his village is attached. He must also assist the police in the detection of crime in his village. The village watchmen in this district are *jhānkars* and Gāndās appointed under the Revenue Regulations of the Central Provinces and remunerated by grants of land. These watchmen have been treated as public servants ever since the first British settlement, the rule in all *khālsa gaontiāhi* and *ryotwāri* villages being that where service land is held by them, it is exempted by Government from assessment up to a maximum valuation of one-eighth of the ryotī rental paid by the village. In addition to their income from such holdings both *jhānkar* and Gāndā are entitled to contributions of grain from ryots and *gaontiās* at harvest time. This grain cess is of some assistance to those watchmen who find difficulty in cultivating their own plots, but its value is rarely more than Rs. 2 or Rs. 3, and it is difficult to collect it in bad seasons, when the watchmen need it most.

The Gāndā watchman also used to have a valuable perquisite in the hides and horns of all cattle dying in the village, but this monopoly no longer exists. In other districts of the Central Provinces it had been found that the watchmen were tempted to commit or abet cattle-poisoning in order to add to their incomes. As a check upon nefarious practices it was ruled that the hides and horns of all dead animals were the property of the owners, and could be taken by the watchmen only if not claimed by the owners. The result has been that the *gaontiās* and zamīndārs, interpreting the new rule in their own favour against the *chaukīdārs*, have been tempted by the recent great rise in the price of hides to add to their own incomes. It is now usual to find that the contract for all hides is given annually to a Chamār, who is an agent for a large dealer. The *gaontiā* grudgingly pays the despoiled *chaukīdār* five or ten per cent of his profits.

Under the system sketched above the *jhānkar* is almost invariably well remunerated in land held free of revenue. This office has long been a hereditary one in certain families, and in the older villages much of the service land is held by branches of the working *jhānkar's* family. Most of these holders can prove very long undisturbed possession, and at the last settlement the holders were treated as sub-tenants of the working *jhānkar*, paying their fixed rentals to him. On the other hand, the Gāndā usually holds very little land, what he holds is of poor quality, and he has little leisure for its cultivation. In small remote hamlets there is usually only one watchman, his work is light, and he has at least as good an income as the aboriginal ryots. His position is different in the larger villages which have

expanded, and especially in growing hamlets thrown out from a parent village; in the latter case each hamlet has a Gāndā *chaukīdār* only, who is under the general superintendence of the *jhānkar* of the principal village. Recently steps have been taken to improve the position of those watchmen whose income has become inadequate. It has been realized that the working of the system has hitherto been one-sided, for where there is service land valued in excess for one-eighth of the ryotī rental, an assessment has been levied, but where the service land is short, no compensating drawback has been given. This anomaly has now been removed, and 78 *chaukīdārs* in the more populous villages of *khālsa* have been allowed cash drawbacks amounting to Rs. 495 per annum.

JAILS. There is a district jail at Sambalpur which has accommodation for 190 prisoners distributed as follows. There are barracks without separate sleeping accommodation for 92 male convicts, 24 female convicts and 8 juvenile convicts, 13 male under-trial prisoners and 6 civil prisoners; there are barracks with separate sleeping accommodation for 29 male convicts and cells for 7 male and 3 female prisoners; while the hospital contains 8 beds. The industries carried on in the jail are aloe pounding, stone breaking, oil pressing, wheat grinding, twine spinning and rope making from aloe fibre; bedding, known commonly as *tātpatti*, is also made from aloe fibre for the use of the prisoners.

CHAPTER XIII.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

CONSTITUTION OF DISTRICT COUNCIL AND LOCAL BOARDS.

THE system of local self-government in Sambalpur is different from that in other districts of Bengal. Outside the municipal area of Sambalpur, it is regulated by the Central Provinces Local Self-Government Act I of 1883, which provided for the creation of local administrative bodies in place of the committees, consisting of nominated members, which had till then been entrusted with the management of local funds. Under the system now in force there is a District Council for the whole district area and two Local Boards for each *tahsīl*, one being for the *khālsa* and the other for the zamīndāris: in other words, there are four Local Boards, known as the Sambalpur (or Sadar), Bargarh, Northern Zamīndāri and Southern Zamīndāri Local Boards.

The constitution of the *Khālsa* Local Boards is as follows. A certain proportion of members consists of *mukaddams* or village headmen representing circles of villages, each of whom is elected by the *mukaddams* of the circle in the presence of the *Tahsīldār* or Additional *Tahsīldār*. Another proportion consists of representatives of the mercantile and trading classes, who are elected by a body of electors of those classes enrolled by the Deputy Commissioner. A third proportion, not exceeding one-third of the whole, consists of members nominated by Government. The constitution of the Zamīndāri Local Boards is simple, each zamīndāri being represented on the Board by the zamīndār himself or by the Manager of the Court of Wards on his behalf. The *Tahsīldār* is Secretary and the Deputy Commissioner is Chairman of each of these Boards.

The members of the District Council belong to three classes:—(1) representatives of the Local Boards, (2) representatives of the mercantile classes, and (3) members nominated by the local Government. The representatives of the Local Boards are elected at meetings of the Local Boards specially convened for the purpose; but not less than half of the representatives of the *Khālsa* Local Boards must be *mukaddams*. At present, the Zamīndāri Local Boards elect two representatives each, and the *Khālsa* Local Boards nine representatives, four being elected by

the Sambalpur and five by the Bargarh Local Board. The representatives of the mercantile classes are elected by a body of electors resident within areas outside the jurisdiction of the Local Boards and enrolled by the Deputy Commissioner under the orders of the Commissioner. At present, there are, besides 5 nominated members, 15 elected members, viz., two members elected to represent the mercantile classes, four elected by the Sambalpur Local Board, five by the Bargarh Local Board, two by the Northern Zamīndāri Local Board and two by the Southern Zamīndāri Local Board. The members of the District Council and Local Boards ordinarily hold office for 3 years, and elect, subject to the approval of Government, a Chairman and Secretary, who are its executive officers.

FUNCTIONS OF DISTRICT COUNCIL. The District Council has no powers of taxation, and its income is derived from the following sources :—the net proceeds of the road and school rates, the former fixed at 3 per cent. and the latter at 2 per cent. on the land revenue; the surplus derived from fines in cattle pounds; the proceeds of public ferries; rents and profits from Government land outside municipal limits; and contributions from Provincial revenues. Its duties consist in the allotment and supervision of expenditure on the objects for the maintenance of which its income is raised.

The most important of these objects is education, for the Council is responsible for the maintenance of rural schools, the provision of buildings and apparatus, and the appointment of masters, subject to the supervision and advice of the Deputy Commissioner and Inspector of Schools. At present (1907-08), the Council maintains 5 Middle Vernacular schools, situated at Bargarh, Barpāli, Remendā, Rāmpelā and Tāmparsarā, which are attended by 922 pupils, besides 92 Upper Primary schools, with an attendance of 7,902 pupils. In other words, it maintains five-sixths of the schools in the district, and provides for the education of about four-fifths of the total number under instruction Next in importance among the functions of the Council are the maintenance and extension of civil works, such as roads and buildings. The main routes are under the charge of the Public Works Department, but the Council has in its charge 56 miles of unmetalled roads and 120 miles of village tracks. A District Engineer has recently been appointed to supervise these roads and the buildings maintained by the Council. As regards the provision of medical relief and sanitary improvements, the Council makes contributions to the dispensary fund for expenditure on dispensaries and vaccination, and also provides for village sanitation by constructing wells. Three dispensaries, situated at Sambalpur,

Bargarh and Jharsagurā, are aided by it, and contributions are made to the upkeep of the Civil Surgeon's establishment. Besides this, it gives grants towards the upkeep of the veterinary dispensary at Sambalpur and towards the Agricultural Show held annually at Sambalpur. Ferries and pounds are also under its control. The former are generally leased out, contracts for the collection of tolls being sold annually at auction. The system of farming out pounds (of which there are 34) is not in vogue; they are managed by pound *muharrirs* and servants, who receive monthly allowances. Lastly, expenditure on famine relief is in the first instance a charge on District Council funds, but if distress becomes at all severe, the amount available from its funds is entirely inadequate, and the burden must be transferred to Provincial funds.

The income of the District Council during the 10 years ending in 1900-01 was Rs. 30,938 per annum, and its average annual expenditure was Rs. 32,120. In 1907-08 it had an opening balance of Rs 36,000 and other receipts amounted to Rs. 1,19,000, but of this sum Rs. 50,000 represented contributions from Provincial funds, while the repayment of advances and deposits accounted for Rs 34,000. The disbursements in the same year were Rs. 1,16,000, of which Rs. 88,000 were chargeable to current income. The permanent income of the Council is far smaller than that of any District Board in Bengal: in 1907-08 local rates realized only Rs. 22,000, and it is mainly dependent on subsidies from Provincial funds. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.

There are four Local Boards, one each for the Northern and Southern Zamīndāri estates, and one for the remaining area of each *tahsīl*. The area under the jurisdiction of the Sambalpur Local Board is 1,100 square miles with a population of 197,184, and its affairs are administered by a body consisting of 18 members, of whom 12 are elected, 4 are nominated and 2 are *ex-officio* members. The Bargarh Local Board is composed of 22 members, of whom 18 are elected, 3 are nominated and one is an *ex-officio* member; the area under its jurisdiction is 1,053 square miles with a population of 220,676. The Northern Zamīndāri Board consists of 8 members, including 6 elected and 2 *ex-officio* members; it has jurisdiction over 513 square miles with a population of 76.867. The Southern Zamīndāri Board consists of 9 members, including 7 elected and 2 *ex-officio* members; the area within its jurisdiction is 1,158 square miles with a population of 144,265 persons. LOCAL BOARDS.

The Local Boards have no independent income, but submit to the District Council a statement of their requirements and

an estimate of their probable expenditure, and the District Council makes allotments of funds to each Local Board. The members do what they can to encourage education in the localities in which they reside, and supervise the repairs of schools and pounds, the construction of wells, and the repair of village roads under the supervision of the *Tahsīldārs*. The latter, however, do any account work which has to be done, and sign bills for petty works. The members exercise supervision over the spending of money allotted for various specified purposes by the District Council; they report the needs of their localities to the *Tahsīldārs* as they visit them on tour; and there is very little business to be transacted at meetings.

Regarding the general nature of the work done by the members, the Deputy Commissioner writes:—"They are men of influence in the localities in which they reside, and do a good deal of unobtrusive work as members of School Committees in furthering the cause of education and in inducing parents to send their children to school, in seeing that village headmen repair their village roads, in supervising small works of construction and repair, and in guiding public opinion. As deliberative bodies, the Local Boards are of little use, and the chief value of meetings is to bring the members together for the discussion of such topics as arboriculture, water-supply, sanitation and even agricultural improvements. But individually, as a zamīndār or as the elected representative of the headmen of a group of villages, a Local Board member is capable of doing, and often does, a good deal of public work."

MUNICIPALITIES. Sambalpur is the only municipality in the district. It first received a municipal constitution in 1867, when the Punjab Municipal Act of that year was made applicable to the Central Provinces, of which the district formed part until 1905. Subsequently, in 1873, a special Act was passed for the Central Provinces; and the municipality, as now constituted, was established in 1883. Municipal administration is regulated by a revised Act passed in 1889, viz., the Central Provinces Municipal Act (XVIII of 1889). The area within municipal limits is 3 square miles with a population of 14,003, and for administrative purposes is divided into 11 wards. The Municipal Board or Committee consists of 16 members, including 12 elected and 4 nominated members.

The average annual income and expenditure of the municipality were Rs 28,000 and Rs. 29,000 respectively for the decade ending in 1901. In 1907-08 the total receipts were Rs. 36,000 (excluding the opening balance of Rs. 16,000) and

the incidence of taxation was Re. 1-15-4 per head of the population, the latter figure being higher than in any other municipality in Orissa. The expenditure in the same year was Rs. 43,000. The municipality maintains 4 Primary schools, attended by about 300 boys, at an annual average cost of about Rs. 2,600, and also makes an annual grant of Rs. 250 to an Urdū school maintained by the Muhammadan community.

The principal source of income is the octroi tax, which in 1907-08 realized Rs. 22,000, or about three-fifths of the total receipts. This is a tax or duty imposed upon goods brought into the town for consumption, the duty being levied according to a definite scale of rates. The list of dutiable articles contains only staple commodities of local consumption, and the tax is not levied on goods in transit. Articles of food, such as grain, sugar, *ghī*, etc., form the most important subject of the octroi taxation, but cloth, piece-goods, articles of clothing and dress contribute a fair proportion of the receipts; minor items are building materials, oil and oil-seeds, articles used for fuel, lighting and washing, metals, drugs and spices. After octroi, the principal source of income consists of conservancy and latrine fees levied on the rental value of holdings.

CHAPTER XIV.

EDUCATION.

PROGRESS OF EDUCATION. SAMBALPUR is one of the most backward districts in Bengal in respect of education, largely, it may be conjectured, because a considerable proportion of the population is composed of aboriginals or semi-aboriginals, who are poor, ignorant, and indifferent to the benefits of education. How backward the district is may be realized from the statistics of literacy obtained at the census of 1901. The only test of literacy was ability to read and write, people of any age who could do this being entered as literate and those who could not as illiterate. The qualification seems a simple one, but even so not more than 3·3 per cent. of the male population were able to fulfil it, while the total number of females able to read and write was only 400. These figures indicate a very low standard of education—indeed, they show that Sambalpur is the most backward district in Bengal—but on the other hand there can be no doubt that there has been a marked advance in recent years. Thirty years ago, it is reported, a man able to read and write was hardly to be found in any village, and men had to be imported from Cuttack for the posts of school-masters and *patwāris* and for other appointments involving clerical work. There is now no lack of local men for such posts, and of late years an increasing number of students have taken University degrees and gone further afield to earn their livelihood in various professions.

Further evidence of progress is afforded by the statistics showing the number of pupils under instruction, from which it appears that in 1880-81 there were 3,266 children attending school and 7,145 in 1890-91. After the latter year, the number of Primary schools gradually increased, until in 1897 there were 153 schools attended by nearly 9,000 pupils. In 1898, however, the financial embarrassment of the District Council necessitated the closure of 82 schools, and the number of pupils under instruction consequently fell to 4,244 in 1900-01. This measure created great discontent, Government was memorialized, and eventually, in 1901, it awarded a grant for opening 50 new schools. In the next year an additional grant was made for converting the

combined "system-and-result aided" schools into District Council schools, and the number of pupils under instruction consequently rose to 9,376 in 1903-04. On the transfer of the district with a diminished area to the Province of Bengal in 1905, the number of schools and scholars was reduced by 16 and 1,368, respectively. In the few years which have since elapsed there has been considerable progress, the result being that there are more than thrice as many children at school as there were in 1880-81. The majority of the schools are maintained by the District Council, and it is reported that they are efficient and the buildings good; but their number is small, and in most zamīndāris it is impossible for the inhabitants to send their children to school, however anxious they may be to do so.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

According to the returns for 1906-07 there are 120 schools in the district attended by 10,852 pupils, *i.e.*, there is one school for every 31 square miles and for every 22 villages, and 1·7 per cent. of the population receive instruction: the percentage of boys at school to the number of boys of school-going age is, however, as high as 20·2 per cent. The schools include one High English school, 6 Middle Vernacular schools and 113 Primary schools. Of these schools 8 are managed by Government, 97 by the District Council, 4 by the Sambalpur Municipality and 11 (10 unaided and one aided) by private persons. There are no technical schools and no special schools for backward races, with the exception of a small school maintained by the Baptist Mission at Sambalpur. The inspecting agency consists of a Deputy Inspector of Schools and two Sub-Inspectors.

SECONDARY EDUCATION.

There is no college in the district and only one High school, which is maintained by Government. The latter was originally a Zilā school founded at Sambalpur in 1852, but was converted into a High school in 1885. The attendance at this school rose from 142 in the year 1886 to 214 in 1906-07. A boarding house is attached to it for the convenience of boys from the mofussil, and has accommodation for about 20 boarders.

There is no Middle English school, but six Middle Vernacular schools have been established, which are attended by 1,027 pupils, as against 104 in 1901-02. One of these schools, the Patnaikparā school at Sambalpur, is maintained by the Municipality, and five, situated at Bargarh, Remendā, Rāmpelā, Barpāli and Tāmparsarā, are maintained by the District Council. Each of the latter five schools has a boarding house attached to it. They are all first-grade Middle Vernacular schools, *i.e.*, are merely Primary schools with two extra classes, thus continuing the course of primary education for two years longer.

PRIMARY EDUCATION.

Boys' schools.

Altogether 92 Upper Primary schools and 15 Lower Primary schools for boys have been established. The number of scholars in 1906-07 was 9,178, as against 6,624 attending 64 Upper Primary and 50 Lower Primary schools in 1901-02. The curriculum in the Primary schools is somewhat different from that in other districts of Bengal. Besides reading, writing and arithmetic, the course of instruction comprises simple lessons in the structure and growth of plants, the methods of agriculture, the preparation of the *patwāri's* village records and registers, the incidents of different land-tenures, the local law of landlord and tenant, and the system of accounts kept by the village money-lenders.

Girls' schools.

Nothing is so noticeable in the recent history of education in Sambalpur as the advance which has been made in female education. In 1900-01 only 471 girls were attending school, but the number has now risen to 1,332, of whom 899 read in boys' schools and 433 in girls' schools. There are six of the latter situated at Sambalpur, Rāmpelā, Atābirā, Barpāli, Bargarh, and Padampur in the Borāsāmbar zamīndāri. They are all Upper Primary schools and are all managed by Government. These schools were formerly District Council schools, but were transferred to the control of Government in 1903. The course of study is nearly the same as for boys, except that needle-work is taught as a compulsory subject and the lessons in agriculture and land tenures are omitted.

TRAINING SCHOOLS.

There are no training schools in the district, but training classes for pupil teachers have been attached to the five Middle Vernacular schools managed by the District Council. In connection with these training classes, 20 pupil teachers' scholarships of Rs. 5 a month each and 20 District Council scholarships of Rs. 3 a month each are awarded annually.

EDUCATION OF MUHAMMADANS AND ABORIGINALS.

Muhammadans form a very small minority in Sambalpur, and the number of Muhammadan pupils in the public schools is only 113. Of these, 61 attend an Urdū school at Sambalpur, which is aided by the Municipality. Altogether 1,119 children belonging to backward races or aboriginal tribes are under instruction, but great difficulty is experienced in persuading the forest tribes to send their children to school.

CHAPTER XV.

GAZETTEER.

Ambābhonā.—A village situated in the north-west of the Bargarh subdivision, 20 miles north of Bargarh. It is reached from the latter place by a cart-track *viâ* Dwāri Ghāt. Ambābhonā is the headquarters of a police thāna and contains a Primary school and post office. It was a fortified place in the days of the Rājās of Sambalpur, and the remains of an old fort are still in existence. There is also an old stone temple, dedicated to Siva and known as the temple of Kedārnāth, which is said to have been constructed, with other temples in the Bargarh *tahsīl*, by Dakhni Rai, *Dīwān* of Rājā Jait Singh of Sambalpur, over 100 years ago.

Atābirā.—A village situated 17 miles west of Sambalpur on the Raipur-Sambalpur road. Population (1901) 1,353. The village contains a police station, a Primary school, a girls' school, a *sarai* maintained by the District Council, and an inspection bungalow maintained by the Public Works Department. Being nearly halfway between Sambalpur and Bargarh, it is used by travellers as a halting place, and its trade and population are reported to be on the increase.

Bargarh.—Headquarters of the *tahsīl* of the same name, situated on the Raipur road and on the left bank of the Jīrā river 29 miles west of Sambalpur. Population (1901) 3,609. The village contains a dispensary, inspection bungalow, Anglo-Vernacular Middle school, Guru-training school, girls' school, telegraph office and post office. It is an important centre for local trade, being the entrepôt for most of the grain trade of the subdivision. A weekly bazar is held every Friday, and it is the biggest cattle market in the district. The Subdivisional Officer at present resides and holds his court at Sambalpur. According to tradition, Bargarh was founded by Balrām Deva, the first Rājā of Sambalpur, who first established himself at Nuāgarh (literally the new fort) in the Bargarh *tahsīl*, and then moved his headquarters to Baragarh, *i.e.*, the great fort, the present Bargarh. The village was given *muāf* to two Brāhmans, named Krishna Dās and Nārāyan Dās, by Rājā

Nārāyan Singh in consequence of their father, Balki Dās, having been killed in an action with the rebel Gonds under Bandyā Rai and Mahāpātra Rai.

Bargarh Subdivision.—Western subdivision of the district, extending over 2,225 square miles. It is bounded on the north by the Sārangarh State, the Phuljhar zamīndāri of the Raipur district, and the Padampur zamīndāri of the Bilāspur district; on the west by the Khariār zamīndāri of the Raipur district; on the south by the Pātnā and Sonpur Feudatory States; and on the east by the river Mahānadī, which separates it for the greater part from the Sambalpur subdivision, only a small portion of the latter lying west of the river. The east of the subdivision consists mainly of a fertile plain intersected by the Jīrā and Dantā rivers, but to the north-east there is an extensive range of hills called the Bārapahār hills, the highest point in which is Debrigarh (2,267 feet high). To the south-west is the Borāsāmbar zamīndāri, which is bounded on three sides by hill ranges and watered by the Ang river.

The subdivision includes the Bargarh *tahsīl* (*khālsa*), with an area of 827 square miles, and 9 zamīndāris, viz., Borāsāmbar, Barpāli, Bheran, Bijepur, Ghes, Kharsal, Mandomahāl, Pahārsirgirā and Pātkulandā. For administrative purposes it is divided into 5 thānas, viz., Ambābhonā, Atābirā, Bargarh, Padampur and Sohelā. The population, according to the census of 1901, is 364,941 (212,511 in the *khālsa* and 152,430 in the zamīndāris), and the density of population is 164 persons per square mile.

Barpāli.—A zamīndāri in the south of the Bargarh subdivision, extending over 98 square miles. Population (1901) 28,875. It is a feudal zamīndāri, which dates back about 300 years to the reign of Baliār Singh, the fifth Rājā of Sambalpur, who assigned it as a maintenance grant to his second son, Bikram Singh. The present proprietor of the zamīndāri is Rai Lāl Nriparāj Singh Bahādur, who has a net income of Rs. 13,000 per annum and pays a *takoli* or feudal tribute of Rs. 2,600. Both the zamīndār and his son exercise magisterial powers. The estate has recently been taken under the management of the Court of Wards on account of indebtedness.

The headquarters of the zamīndāri are at Barpāli, situated 11 miles south of Bargarh, which at the census of 1901 had a population of 4,414 persons. It is an old town with a large community of silk weavers and a considerable trade. It contains a Middle Vernacular school, a girls' school, and a police outpost. There are two old temples in this village, viz., the temple of Samleswarī, which was built by Bikram Singh, and the temple of

Jagannāth said to have been built by Hirde Sāi, his son. The sanitation of the village is managed by the *mukaddam*, helped by a *panchāyat*, under the *Mukaddam* Rules. For some time past Barpāli has had a reputation for unhealthiness, many of its inhabitants suffering from elephantiasis and goitre. Steps have recently been taken to analyse the water of the tanks used for drinking, and the water of some of the old tanks has been drained off.

Bheran.—A zamīndāri in the south-east of the Bargarh subdivision, extending over 33 square miles. It is also known as Bisaikelā. Population (1901) 8,905. The zamīndāri has been held by Gonds for many centuries and is said to have been a chiefship established even before the Chauhān Rājput dynasty of the Rājās of Sambalpur. In the rebellion of Surendra Sāi, the zamīndār revolted and was killed in an action with the British troops. The other members of the family surrendered under the amnesty. The present zamīndār is Balrām Singh, a Gond by caste, who is commonly given the title of Dīwān. The *takoli* paid by the zamīndār is Rs. 1,600, and the net income of the estate is Rs. 3,406. It is now under the management of the Court of Wards in consequence of indebtedness. The headquarters are at Bheran, where there are a police outpost and a Primary school. Its population in 1901 was 1,666, and it is a centre of the local trade in hides.

Bijepur.—A zamīndāri in the Bargarh subdivision, extending over 83 square miles. Population (1901) 13,587. It was originally a Gond chiefship, but in 1841 Mahārāj Sāi, the then Rājā of Sambalpur, made a grant of it to one Gopī Kultā as a reward for loyal service. Subsequently, the grant was confirmed by the British Government, in recognition of services rendered during the rebellion of Surendra Sāi, at a quit-rent of Rs. 350 fixed for a term of 40 years. That term expired in 1903, and a *takoli* or feudal tribute of Rs. 1,600 has now been fixed. The net income is Rs. 5,443. The proprietor of the estate is Bābu Shankarshan Garhtiā, who exercises third-class magisterial powers. The title of Garhtiā was conferred on his ancestor in recognition of the aid he rendered to Major Roughsedge about 80 years ago when marching against the rebellious zamīndārs of Borāsāmbar.

This zamīndāri is also called Uttal-Baisi. It is said that before the grant to Gopī Kultā there were two Gond zamīndāris, one of which was called Uttal with headquarters at Talpadar, a village in Bijepur, where there was a fort called the Uttal fort; while the other, consisting of 22 villages, with headquarters at Bijepur, was called Baisi. The headquarters of the zamīndāri are at Bijepur, which contains a police outpost, school and branch post office.

Bisaikelā.—See Bheran.

Borāsāmbar.—A zamīndāri in the extreme south-west of the Bargarh subdivision, extending over 841 square miles. Population (1901) 83,806. The zamīndāri contains 434 villages and consists of two distinct portions. The eastern portion lying in the valley of the Ang river is well cultivated and contains a settled population; but all the western part consists of hills and glens scantily cultivated by aboriginal headmen and their tenants. A long range of hills, which, however, do not rise over 2,200 feet above sea-level, forms the boundary to the north, separating Borāsāmbar from Phuljhar. A still more continuous and lofty range, of which the height varies from 2,000 to nearly 3,000 feet, forms the boundary between it and the Pātnā State. A considerable area is under forest, which yields an annual income of Rs. 6,400. The *takoli* of the zamīndār is Rs. 8,400, and his net income is Rs. 24,000.

The nucleus of the estate consisted of a few villages known by the name of Atgarh, but by degrees the family, which was a very warlike one, increased in power and acquired territory from the neighbouring chiefships of Phuljhar and Pātnā, until Borāsāmbar became an important State and was considered worthy of being included in the cluster of States known as the 18 Garhjāts. The zamīndār is a Binjhāl, who, like his ancestors, enjoys the right of affixing the *tikā* to the Mahārājās of Pātnā on their accession. The legend accounting for this practice is as follows. When the Muhammadan emperors of Delhi were conquering Rājputāna, a queen of one of the Rājput houses fled southwards, after her husband had been killed by the conquerors, till she reached Borāsāmbar, where she gave birth to a son. The Binjhāl chief of Borāsāmbar took pity on them and gave them shelter. Pātnā was at this time a dependency of Borāsāmbar, and was ruled by an aboriginal chief, who was elected by a Council consisting of eight persons called Māliks. These Māliks were jealous of their power and had no intention of letting any man occupy the throne for any time. Accordingly, whenever they elected a chief, they took him to the temple of Patmisrī (properly Pātneswarī) and asked him to do obeisance to the deity. No sooner had he prostrated himself than he was beheaded by the Māliks, who pretended that the deity considered he was not a fit man to sit on the throne and had therefore devoured him. The result was that every day a man was elected chief and killed.

Now a Brāhman of Pātnā, when on a visit to Borāsāmbar, learnt that the chief had given shelter to the Chauhān princess and her son, and, with the permission of the Borāsāmbar chief,

took them to Pàtnā. While they lived in his house, it was the Brāhman's turn to be elected chief. Being afraid of losing his life, he sent the Chauhān boy, who was just reaching manhood, as a substitute. The boy was duly elected chief and went to the temple with the Māliks. The latter, as usual, asked him to prostrate himself before the deity, but he told the Māliks to do so first. When they were prostrating themselves, he killed them all with his sword and came out of the temple alive. As it was clear from this that he was approved by the deity, he was at once hailed by the people as their ruler and became the first Chauhān Rājā of Pātnā. The Binjhāl chief of Borāsāmbar, the overlord of Pātnā, sanctioned his claim to the principality, came to Pātnā, and put the *tikā* of a Rājā on his forehead. To this day each of his descendants has exercised the same right, also placing a *pagri* of *pāt* or silk on the head of the Rājā of Pātnā at the time of accession.

The zamīndār of Borāsāmbar is called Pāt-Bariha, a name accounted for by the fact that the traditional sport of the family is hunting the wild boar (*varāha*). According to tradition, the founders of the family were twelve archer brothers, who one day were out hunting a hare and boar of changing colour. While engaged in the chase, their arrows miraculously flew as far as Purī and stuck in the great door of Jagannāth's temple. The Rājā of Purī in vain endeavoured to pull them out, and even the royal elephants failed to make them move. Only the twelve brothers could extract them, and thereupon the Rājā, admiring their strength, made them rulers of the forest tract called Dandakāranya.

The headquarters of the zamīndāri were formerly at Borāsāmbar, 8 miles south-west of Padampur, where there is an old temple, constructed of rough stone and mortar, dedicated to Pātneswarī. Padampur is now the headquarters, a large village with a population of 2,133 persons at the census of 1901. It is a thriving place, and a number of Cutchī merchants have settled there, because there is a large trade in oil-seeds with Raipur. It contains a dispensary, police station, girls' school, Primary school, branch post office, and a Technical Institute for training weavers in the use of the fly-shuttle loom, which was established by the zamīndār in 1907. Padampur is also the headquarters of a Revenue Inspector and Excise Sub-Inspector, and the Baptist Mission of Sambalpur has a branch station there.

Chaurpur.—A village on the right bank of the Mahānadī, about a mile from Sambalpur. It contains a population of 888 persons, according to the census of 1901, mostly fishermen, who are the principal suppliers of fish to the town of Sambalpur. The

village is an old one, being the seat of the first Rājā of Sambalpur, Balrām Deva, before Sambalpur town was founded by him.

Dakshintīr and Uttartīr.—Names meaning the southern and northern tracts, still commonly used by the people for the Bargarh and Sambalpur subdivisions respectively. "These names embody history. When they were first used, the important part of the present Sambalpur *tahsīl* lay north of Sambalpur town beside Rampalugā, Padampur and Chandarpur in the Mahānadī valley, and beside Talab, Rāmpelā and Lapangā in the valley of the Ib river, its tributary. There was then little or no cultivation in the south among the forest-clad hills of Tāmpargarh and Garh Loisingh. To the west, in Bargarh *tahsīl*, agricultural and political interest centred in Rusrā, Remendā and Bargarh, towns of the southern plain. The western zamīndāris of Borāsāmbar and Phuljhar were regarded as being Feudatory States, not part of the district proper, and it is only of late years that the uplands in the north have been fully cleared and settled. Few matters in the district are more striking than the antiquity of certain villages and the recent pioneer cultivation of others not far distant."*

Debrigarh.—A peak in the Bārapahār range of hills in the Bargarh subdivision, having a height of 2,267 feet. This used to be a stronghold of the Rājās of Sambalpur, and, according to local tradition, it was here that the Marāthās under Chandājī Bhonslā captured Rājā Jait Singh and his son Mahārāj Singh a little over a century ago. It was a noted rebel stronghold during the revolt of Balbhadra Dāo, the Gond zamīndār of Lakhanpur, who was killed here. Mahāpātra Rai and Bandyā Rai also sought shelter here about 70 years ago after murdering Balki Dās, the *muāfidār* of Bargarh; and Surendra Sāi was captured here in 1864. The place is 20 miles north of Bargarh, from which place a cart-track leads to the foot of the hill; thence one has to climb the hill for 3 miles. There is, or rather was, a small village close by, for, as it has recently been acquired by Government and included in the forest reserve, its inhabitants have left it. Two miles north of the village is a large cave in the hillside called Bārabakhrā, which is said to be capable of holding 400 men.

Dhāmā.—A village in the Sambalpur subdivision, situated 15 miles south of Sambalpur on the Sambalpur-Sonpur road. The population at the last census was 1,350. A weekly bazar is held here every Saturday, and a considerable timber

* F. Dewar, *Sambalpur Settlement Report*, 1906.

trade is carried on. The village is situated on the left bank of the Mahānadī river, and the old Sonpur road crossed the river here. It contains a police outpost, Primary school, branch post office, and a *sarai*.

Gaisāmā.—A village in the Bargarh subdivision, situated about 8 miles north of Barpāli, close to the river Jīrā. It contains a temple dedicated to Bālakeswar, which is said to have been constructed by Ubhaya Singh, Rājā of Sambalpur, in the 18th century. Legend relates that the Rājā had gone to visit the temple then standing on the spot, and was given a flower by the priest, who told him it was a gift from the god. The Rājā, however, noticed a hair in it and asked what it meant, whereupon the shrewd priest explained that the deity had hairs on his head like a man. The Rājā then gave orders that a stone temple was to be built in honour of the god with human hair.

Garh Loisingh.—See Loisingh.

Ghes.—A zamīndāri in the Bargarh subdivision, extending over 40 square miles. Population (1901) 6,669. It was originally an appanage of the Borāsāmbar zamīndāri, having been created by partition or assignment. The zamīndārs are Binjhāls by caste, and were involved in the insurrection of Surendra Sāi. One of the family was transported in 1864, and died while undergoing sentence. His son remained in outlawry for several years after the amnesty had been proclaimed, but was captured in 1865 and hanged for murder. The *takoli* paid by the zamīndār is Rs. 1,200, and his net income is Rs. 2,439. The estate was formerly under the management of the Court of Wards, but was released in July 1908.

Hansamurā Katapāli.—A village near the bank of the Ib river about 5 miles from the Jharsagurā railway station. Population (1901) 1,399. The village contains a large number of gardens, in which tobacco is successfully grown, and the soil is also very well suited for potato cultivation. There is a private school here, in which Oriyā is taught up to the Lower Primary standard.

Hīrākud.—A small island lying between two branches of the river Mahānadī, about 6 miles north of Sambalpur. Its area is 828 acres, but the population is very scanty, only 70 inhabitants being returned at the last census. The name means the diamond island, diamond mining being formerly carried on by a class of people called Jhorās, for whose maintenance, it is said, the revenue of about 30 villages on either bank of the river Mahānadī was assigned by the former Rājās of Sambalpur. These people worked during the cold and hot weather, when the water was

low. The work was done in the bed of the river in either branch, and some large and valuable diamonds are known to have been found in the right branch. Sanction has recently been given to the grant to Dīwān Bahādur Kastur Chānd of Kāmpti of a license to prospect for diamonds and other precious stones.

Hūmā.—A village in the headquarters subdivision, situated on the western bank of the Mahānadī, 14 miles south of Sambalpur. The village contains a temple dedicated to Mahādeva, which was built in the reign of Baliār Singh, the fifth Rājā of Sambalpur. The worship of Mahādeva is said to have been initiated by a Gaura, who daily crossed the Mahānadī to a place on the bank where the underlying rock cropped out. Here he daily offered his dole of milk, which was at once drunk up by the rock; and this miraculous circumstance led to enquiries, which ended in the construction of the present temple. Hūmā is a place of pilgrimage, and is also visited by strangers out of curiosity to see the different kinds of fish in the river; the latter are said to be so tame that they will eat sweetmeats from the hands of those who bathe close to the temple. An annual fair is held here, which was formerly the occasion of an agricultural show; the latter is now held at Sambalpur. The temple has an endowment consisting of Hūmā and 6 other villages, which have been exempted from assessment so long as the temple stands and the religious ceremonies are maintained. The grant is an old one, being said to date back to the time of Balrām Deva, first Rājā of Sambalpur.

Jaipur.—See Kolābirā.

Jharsagurā.—A village in the north of the Sambalpur subdivision, situated 30 miles to the north of Sambalpur. It contains a station on the main line of the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway, which is the junction for a branch line running to Sambalpur, a police station and a settlement of grain-dealers established on land acquired by Government for the purpose. In the new *bastī* of Jharsagurā there are a dispensary, a private Hindī school, and post office. The sanitation of the new *bastī* is managed by a *panchāyat* under the Village Sanitation Act, XI of 1902, and section 34 of the Police Act is also in force. The old village of Jharsagurā is only about half a mile from the new *bastī* and contains a Primary school. The population of both the *bastīs* taken together is 4,306, according to the last census. The village is held *muāf* by Bābu Jagannāth Singh, a member of the Sambalpur Rāj family.

Jamartalā.—A village in the south of Borāsāmbar zamīndāri, close to the border of the Pātnā State. It is surrounded by hills

full of caves, in which a number of Binjhāls and other aborigines, who in 1900 committed many dacoities both in the Pātnā State and the Borāsāmbar zāmīndāri, used to take refuge. The ring-leader of the gang, Bakharyā, and some of his followers, were caught here, while drinking in the liquor shop.

Jujumāra.—A small village on the Sambalpur-Cuttack Road, situated about 20 miles east of Sambalpur. This is a sub-zamīndāri of the Loisingh estate held by a Gond, the sub-zamīndār paying his revenue to the zamīndār of Loisingh. There was a considerable area of forest here, consisting mainly of *sāl* trees, but the forest has been ruthlessly cleared.

Kāmgāon.—A village in the Bargarh *tahsīl*, situated 8 miles north of Bargarh. It has a population (1901) of 1,529 souls, most of whom are Kultās. The village is a very old one, and is said to have been established by the Kultās, when they migrated to this part of the country from the Baud State some 400 years ago. It contains a temple of Rāmchandī (one of the names of Durgā), which is held in great veneration by the Kultās, whose chief families, the Bhois and Padhāns, are its priests. The temple is maintained by *muāfi* plots in the village.

Kharsal.—A zamīndāri in the north of the Bargarh sub-division, extending over 28 square miles. Population (1901) 6,322. The nucleus of the zamīndāri was formed in the reign of Baliār Singh, the fifth Rājā of Sambalpur, by the grant of the village of Kharsal to one Udam Gond in reward for services rendered. In 1860 the then zamīndār was hanged for having taken an active part in Surendra Sāi's rebellion. The *takoli* paid by the zamīndār is Rs. 850 and his net income is Rs. 1,795. The zamīndār has the hereditary title of Sardār.

Khindā.—A village situated 21 miles north of Sambalpur town near the Lapangā railway station. Population (1901) 1,308. This village is a *muāf* grant assigned for the maintenance of the family of the late Sundar (Surendra) Sāi, who belonged to the Rāj family of Sambalpur and claimed succession in preference to Rājā Nārāyan Singh. This claim he endeavoured to enforce by means of disturbances, which culminated in the commission of a murder in 1840, for which he was sentenced to imprisonment for life. Four years later this village was given *muāf* by Rājā Nārāyan Singh for the maintenance of his family. He was released by the mutineers in 1857, and returning to Sambalpur headed a revolt against the British Government. In 1862 he submitted, but he was subsequently found to be carrying on secret intrigues, and was deported from the district in 1864. The village is now held by Krishna Priyā Dei, the wife of Mitra

Bhānu Sāi, the son of Surendra Sāi, who, being involved in the rebellion with his father, was also deported. The Government of India having passed orders allowing Mitra Bhānu Sāi to return to his home at Khindā, he returned there in 1907.

Kodābagā.—A zamīndāri in the north-west of Sambalpur subdivision, extending over 29 square miles. Population (1901) 5,176. The zamīndār is a Gond by caste, and the family took an active part in the rebellion of Surendra Sāi. The *takoli* of the estate is Rs. 800, and the net income of the zamīndār is Rs. 1,592. The present zamīndār is a lady, and the estate is now under the management of the Court of Wards. The headquarters are at Kodābagā, situated about 30 miles north-west of Sambalpur.

Kolābirā.—A zamīndāri in the north-east of the Sambalpur subdivision, extending over 278 square miles, of which 40 square miles are under forest. Population (1901) 40,110. It was created in the reign of Jait Singh, Rājā of Sambalpur, about 1760. The then zamīndār took an active part in the rebellion of Surendra Sāi and was hanged, while his son died an outlaw. The zamīndāri was, however, restored after the amnesty. The *takoli* of the estate is Rs. 3,500, and the net income of the zamīndār is Rs. 13,074. The estate is now under the Court of Wards. It is also called the Jaipur estate. The headquarters are at Kolābirā, situated about 25 miles north of Sambalpur.

Kuilīghoghar.—A temple situated in the jungle of *mauzā* Chhaikhanch in the Kodābagā zamīndāri, about 31 miles north-west of Sambalpur. The village is a *muāfi* grant assigned for the maintenance of the temple. The latter, which is dedicated to Maheswar Bābā and is supposed to be of superhuman construction, is a place of pilgrimage. There is a waterfall near the temple, and the deity is said to live in a pool at the foot of the fall, which is well stocked with fish and snakes. There is also a cave in the adjoining rocks called Maheswarnāth, said to be his place of retreat.

Kumbhāri.—A village in the Bargarh *tahsīl*, situated about 8 miles south of Bargarh, at the junction of the Jīrā and Ranj rivers. Population (1901) 2,668. There are two old temples here, one dedicated to Mahādeva (Siva) and the other to Jagannāth, Balabhadra and Subhadrā. Both the temples are maintained by *muāfi* plots in the village. It is said that the best sugarcane in the district is grown in Kumbhāri.

Kuruan.—A village in the Bargarh *tahsīl*, situated about 8 miles south-east of Bargarh. Population (1901) 739. The village is a *muāfi* village held by the zamīndār of Padampur in the

Bilāspur district. There is an old temple here dedicated to Maheswarī, also called Umā. The temple, which is maintained by the *muāfi* plots given by the proprietor of the village, is a small tiled building; but the deity which it enshrines is held in great veneration by the Hindus, especially by Dumāls, who furnish its priests. A *jātrā* is held here in the month of the Dasaharā and is attended by a large number of people. Married people who have no children visit the temple on this occasion. On the eighth day of the bright fortnight of Dasaharā, one of the Dumāl priests of Maheswarī is believed to be possessed by the deity, whose spiritual influence is shown by his violently shaking his head. On this one day in the year he has the privilege of taking out from the temple two sticks (made of *mahuā* wood), which are said to be the sticks of the deity, and of washing them in the Dantā river about a mile off. While proceeding to the river with the sticks, a crowd of Hindu worshippers follow with offerings. Those who long to have children fast on this day and appear before the Dumāl, while he is under the influence of the deity. The clothes of both husband and wife having been tied together, they fall at the feet of the Dumāl, and do not rise until they are asked to do so by the deity speaking through his lips. They are then told whether their prayer for offspring has been granted or not.

Lairā.—A zamīndāri in the west of the Sambalpur subdivision, extending over 40 square miles. Population (1901) 6,315. The zamīndār, Bābu Brindāban Chandra Singh, is a Gond and pays a *takoli* of Rs. 750, his net income being Rs. 1,628. The estate was taken under the management of the Court of Wards in November 1908. The headquarters are at Lairā, a *khālsa gaontiāhi* village in the Sambalpur subdivision, situated about 28 miles north-east of Sambalpur. It contains a ruined temple to which the following legend attaches. Some 200 years ago, it is said, one Jewar Gond had a dream, in which it was revealed to him that a temple was buried under the ground where he lay. With difficulty he induced the people to believe him, but the place being dug up, his dream was found to be true. The population of the village was 2,229 in 1901.

Lakhanpur.—A village and police outpost in the north-west of the Bargarh subdivision, situated 25 miles north of Bargarh. It contains the site of an old fort, which Nārāyan Singh, Rājā of Sambalpur in the first half of the 19th century, used as his residence, Lakhanpur being his *khamār* or home-farm.

Lapangā.—A village and railway station situated 22 miles from Sambalpur on the branch railway line from Sambalpur to

Jharsagurā. Population (1901) 1,653. There is a temple of Rāmchandī here, which is generally visited by the Kultās of the northern portion of the district. The village also contains a Primary school, branch post office and police outpost. Mica is found here, but it is of poor quality.

Loisingh.—A zamīndārī in the south of the Sambalpur subdivision, extending over 95 square miles. Population (1901) 4,286. This zamīndārī was created about 200 years ago by a former Rājā of Sambalpur, and its inhabitants, under the leadership of Surendra Sāi, gave great trouble during the rebellion of 1857. Madhu, one of the family, was hanged for having taken part in the murder of Dr. Moore, mentioned in Chapter II, but his brother, Chandru, was restored to the estate after the amnesty.

Machidā.—A zamīndāri in the extreme north-east of the Sambalpur subdivision, extending over 10 square miles. Population (1901) 1,376. The occupant family is Gond and obtained the estate about 150 years ago. The *takoli* of the estate is Rs. 200, and the net income of the zamīndāri is Rs. 339. The estate is at present under the management of the Court of Wards. The headquarters of the zamīndāri are at Machidā, about 25 miles north-west of Sambalpur.

Mandomahāl Sirgirā.—A zamīndāri in the Bargarh subdivision, situated to the south-west of Bijepur and extending over 7 square miles. Population (1901) 1,144. The *takoli* fixed for the estate is Rs. 120, and the net income of the zamīndār is Rs. 231.

Murā.—A village in the Sambalpur subdivision, situated 27 miles north-west of Sambalpur on the Sambalpur-*Bilāspur* road. Population (1901) 1,071. The village is said to have been the first place in the Sambalpur subdivision at which the Kultās settled, and it contains a temple of Rāmchandī Devī, maintained by *muāfi* plots, which is held in great veneration by them. There are also a Primary school and police outpost in the village.

Narsinghnāth.—A place of pilgrimage (*tīrtha*) in the Borāsāmbar zamīndāri, situated about 20 miles south-west of Padampur, a few miles west of Borāsāmbar, and 2 miles from the village of Durgāpuli, on the western flank of the Gandamardan range. The following account of the place (also called Hārinpāp) is quoted from an article by Mr. Beglar in the Reports of the Archæological Survey of India, Vol. XIII, published in 1882. "The *tīrtha* is at the source of the Pāpahārinī Nālā (a tributary of the Ang), at the point where it finally leaves the hills after numberless cascades. It rises at the top of the hill and is said to first see the

light at the foot of a large mango tree, where it bubbles forth from a spring. It soon increases in volume by various additions, and descends the west slope of the hill in a series of cascades and rapids, some of which (three) are very high up, and of some height; the third cascade being distinctly visible from a distance of fully 10 miles with the naked eye, and probably from a greater distance. The temples are situated at the point where it finally leaves the foot of the steep hill and starts on its way fairly in the undulating plains; the temples are neither very large nor very remarkable, though sufficiently so for this part of India.

"The most important temple is a tolerably large one in the Khajurāha style, once very elaborately sculptured inside and out, but having fallen into decay, has been repaired with a liberal allowance of plaster, which covers up everything. The *mahāmandapa*, which, however, I was not allowed to enter, has three entrances, and so far is an improvement on the Khajurāha style. These entrances are about the only external portions of the temple not buried in plaster; they are small but elaborately sculptured. All round the tower of the sanctum are rows of statues as at Khajurāha, but these rows of statues are not continued on to the *mahāmandapa*, which on this account, as well from a certain want of proportion (so far as I could judge by the age, for I was not allowed to measure) to the sanctum, I consider to be a subsequent addition, the original one having most probably fallen down. The *mahāmandapa* is supported internally on pillars, which are well carved and apparently old, so far as I could judge looking at them from outside the entrances.

"Tradition ascribes the building of the temple to Bijal Deo Gangabauri, Rājā of Orissa; and it is said that seven successive Pandās have officiated as priests in this temple since its erection. This statement is certainly strange, and I accordingly interpret it thus:—that Bijal Deo was the founder, and the temple fell into decay, but was repaired at one time, since when seven successive Pandās have officiated. This would place the repair of the temples about 150 years back at the utmost, and its erection a few centuries earlier. But we have better grounds to go upon in determining the age of this temple from an inscription which is let into the wall. The inscription, it is true, is on a detached slab simply let into the temple outside, and may or may not belong to it, but it certainly belongs to some temple which once at least existed here; and as this one is clearly the oldest now existing, and therefore, if not the identical one, at least one of a group of temples to which the inscription belonged, its age can with every confidence be ascertained within moderate limits from

it, if the statement of the inscription be not inconsistent with the age which, on architectural data, ought to be assigned to it.

"The inscription is in transitional Oriyā characters, very closely approaching modern Oriyā. It mentions a Bachha Rājā of Pātnā and Bijal Rājā, his son, and records the gift of the village of Loisinga. It is dated, but here is the puzzle. The date is either 672 or 728, which is utterly inconsistent with the forms of the characters, if referred to either the Saka or the Vikrama eras. I am therefore inclined to consider it as a Hijra date, for it was no uncommon thing to use the Hijra or the Fasli date all over Bengal down to so late as a score of years ago, and there is nothing improbable or impossible in its having been used elsewhere also, it being clearly the recognized official era.* If then we consider it as the Hijra, all difficulties are cleared away, for the form of the characters and the character of the architecture both agree with the date.

"Besides this principal temple, there are some other shrines, which are modern and of no interest; there is one small shrine to Mahādeva, which appears old, on the opposite or north bank of the nullah, but it is of no interest. The other objects of interest, or at least of reverence, are the various *kunds* or pools in the bed of the nullah, which are considered efficacious in washing away sins. The lowest is at a spot near the temple called Gan Kund, though why it should be called a *kund* is not evident, as there is no pool, deep or shallow, here at all. Higher up, at a short distance, is a beautiful, small roaring cascade, which falls into a pool below; the cascade is known as the Gaj Dhār. Higher up is another with a fall of about 20 feet, known as the Bhīm Dhār, and still higher, a small water-worn hole in the rocks on the right bank, known as the Sītā Kund; it is fabled to be the spot where Sītā, going to wash certain soiled garments of hers, was blamed greatly by Rāma for attempting to pollute the stream, and she accordingly scooped out the *kund* or hole that exists. Higher up is the Panch Pandu Kund, and other sacred spots. There are several rock sculptures of rude execution, mostly figures of Siva, Nandi, and the Lingam, but also of Brahmā and of Vishnu and of some seated figures."

More recently Mr. G. R. Bhandarkar has given the following account of the remains in the Report of the Archæological Survey of India for 1904-05.

"The temple is situated at the foot of a hill, and is surrounded on all sides by one of the thickest jungles of the Central

* General Cunningham points out that the date of the inscription cannot be the Fasli year.

Provinces. A streamlet gurgles close by, the water of which is regarded as sacred, and at five places accumulates itself into five pools, called *kundas.* The trees and shrubs, with which the hill is overgrown, are so tall and numerous, that even at midday the sunlight that filters through their foliage is hardly stronger or brighter than that of the morning outside the jungle. Higher up on the hill towards the south-east, near the first *kunda*, are four colossal figures, rudely carved out of the rock. They are shown as the first four of the five Pāndava brothers. Close beside the northern door of the temple is another huge rude figure carved out of the rock, which is pointed out as that of Sahadeva, the remaining fifth Pāndava brother. Near him is another colossal figure, which is of Ganapati. Not far from these may be noticed, amongst the broken sculptures lying loose, a nicely chiselled pedestal with seven horses in front of it. The image which was originally set up on it must, doubtless, have been that of Sūrya.

"The temple faces the east, and consists of a shrine and *jagmohan* or hall. In front of the temple, on the other side of the streamlet, is a Garuda *stambha* or pillar, with a small niche at the top where a lamp is lighted during the *Divāli* festival. It is said to have been erected but seven years ago. Near the *jagmohan* are small chambers, which are modern erections. One of them is used as a granary and a cooking-room, where the *bhoga* or offering made to the deity is prepared. Others are occupied by the *pūjārīs* or worshippers, and one of them has been reserved as a *dharamsālā* for pilgrims.

"The walls of the *jagmohan*, as they are at present, are unquestionably rebuilt. The hall had originally three doorways, facing the east, north, and south; but now only the first two remain, the third being blocked up and replaced with masonry work, thus giving an uncouth and unsymmetrical shape to the side wall. The remaining door-frames are of stone of a dark colour, and are deeply and beautifully carved. That on the north has Gajalaksmī occupying the post of honour on the lintel. Laksmī sits on a *padmāsana* or lotus throne with her right leg resting on the throne and her left hanging loose and touching a stool down below. On each side of her is a *chaurī* bearer, and above the latter are two elephants, one on each side, standing on lotuses and holding water pitchers in their trunks. In old temples in the south, Gajalaksmī plays a prominent part on the doorways, specially of the halls. And it is not surprising that the figure of Gajalaksmī should be seen in an old temple in Orissa, which is connected with the south more than with the

north; and, as a matter of fact, even in Orissa, at Cuttack, we meet with a sculpture representing Gajalaksmī in one of its ancient caves.*

"Now, to turn to the temple of Narasinhanātha :—the door-frame on the north has three mouldings, the central one mostly carved with pairs of musicians; and the other two with floral ornamentation. It holds, in relief near the bottom on its proper right, Siva in one compartment and Gangā on a *makara* or crocodile in the other, and on its proper left, Siva again in one compartment and Yamunā on a *kūrma* or tortoise in the other. The door-frame facing the east is almost exactly like this, but the figures at the bottom are not Siva and Gangā or Yamunā, but a *dvārapāla* or door-keeper and a female *chaurī* bearer. In the projecting wall above this doorway are *Navagraha* or the Nine Planets, which are generally sculptured over the entrances of halls or shrines to ward off the influence of evil spirits. Near this door-frame on its proper left is the standing image of a warrior with hands folded and with a sword held against the breast between it and the left hand. Judging from analogous instances, this seems to have been a figure of the personage who was principally connected with either the construction or the restoration of the temple. The roof of the *jagmohan* is supported by the walls, and four columns of stone of a reddish colour and nicely sculptured. In the walls, outside, have been built some sculptures, which, in all likelihood, formed part of the original exterior of the hall.

"On the lintel of the shrine doorway is again a figure of Gajalaksmī, but here Laksmī is seated cross-legged. The door jambs contain, near the bottom, images of Jaya and Vijaya in niches elegantly carved. In other respects, the shrine door-frame is plain and devoid of all ornamentation. There are only three—the principal—niches on the exterior of the shrine. That facing the north has an image of Trivikrama with four hands, one broken off and the other three bearing a conch, a discus, and a mace. Near his foot, on one side, is Laksmī and on the other are three figures, viz., of Vāmana, Bali, and his minister. In the niche at the back is Narasinha, and in that facing the south, Varāha.

"Inside the shrine is a very small image of what is called by the people there Mārjārakesarī, a form of Vishnu with the head of a cat and the body of a lion. It is thickly swathed in clothes and has a brass nose, eyes, and mouth. A long description of the genesis of this incarnation of Vishnu has been set forth in a

* *Cave Temples of India*, by Fergusson and Burgess, p. 71 and pl. I.

local *māhātmya* composed in Oriyā, but a brief account of it will not here be out of place. A certain *rishi* was performing religious austerities on the banks of the Godāvarī. He had a daughter of the name of Mālatī. Rāvana, the demon king of Ceylon, once came thither and was smitten with her beauty. He ravished her, and thereupon the *rishi* cursed her and forthwith quitted the place. She fell into a swoon, and was thrown in this condition into the river by Rāvana. But Godāvarī protected her, and she was brought back safely to the bank. When she regained her consciousness, she began to search after her father. Finding her search to be fruitless, she took to weeping. Her wailings were heard by Mūsaka (mouse), the vehicle of Ganapati, who came up to her. He promised to restore her to her father on condition of enjoying intercourse with her; and thus from Rāvana and Mūsaka was born of her a demon called Mūsakadatta. When the latter grew up, he ate his mother up. Thereafter he performed religious austerities, which propitiated Siva. The god conferred on him the boon that he would have cause for fear from none but Narasinha of the *Satya Yuga*. The demon thus became a source of trouble to the gods. The gods repaired to Rāma Chandra and prayed for his mercy. Rāma Chandra assumed the form of Narasinha and came within sight of Mūsakadatta. The latter fled in fear, and was pursued by Narasinha. The demon approached the mountain called Gandhagiri, where the temple stands, and besought him to grant him refuge. This was granted, and the demon assumed the form of a mouse and entered the mountain. Narasinha had, therefore, to become a cat, and continued the pursuit. But Gandhagiri interceded, and so did the gods also, who requested Narasinha to establish himself there in that feline form, and devour Mūsakadatta when he came out.

"Into the wall of the hall on the outside and facing the south has been stuck a slab of black stone with an inscription engraved thereon in Oriyā characters and in Sanskrit language interspersed with Oriyā words. The slab has been so deeply inserted that it is difficult to take an inked impression of the inscription. It contains four lines of writing, and, as it is a little abraded, it is not easy to decipher it. The inscription records that the temple of Narasinha was built on the Mārjāra mountain by Vejāladevarāja, son of Vairājadevarāja, King of Pātnā, which lies to the other side of the mountain. The mountain is called Gandhagiri in the *māhātmya*, but is named Mārjāra-parvata in the inscription, doubtless after *mārjāra*, the feline form, in which, according to the legend, Narasinha resided.

"The date of the inscription is unfortunately lost, but it does not seem very difficult to arrive at an approximate date. In the list of the Mahārājās of Pātnā supplied in the Central Provinces Gazetteer on pages 483-484, the consecutive names corresponding to Vairājadeva and Vejāladeva of our inscription are Baijul Deo I. and Baikrāj Deo, the third and fourth princes respectively. It will be perceived that here the order of succession is reversed, and that the name of Baikrāj Deo should have preceded that of Baijul Deo I., but such a slip in the genealogical list is pardonable, when it has to be taken so far back as 500 or 600 years. Now, from the same Gazetteer we learn that Rumail Deo, the first king of the dynasty, was born about the year 1250 A.D., and was adopted by the chief of Kholagarh, whom he succeeded when he came of age. Supposing that he came of age at twenty-one years, he ascended the throne in A.D. 1271. He is supposed to have reigned for thirty-two years, and his successor, Mahaling Singh, for six years. Baikrāj Deo, who must be the Vairājadeva of our inscription, and who, as just shown, must be supposed to be the third, and not the fourth, prince in the dynastic list, and consequently the successor of Mahaling Singh, thus came to the throne in A.D. 1309. Baikrāj Deo reigned for thirteen years, and thus we obtain A.D. 1323 as the date of his successor Baijul Deo's accession. We have sixty-five years as the duration of Baijul Deo's reign. Baijul Deo, therefore, reigned from A.D. 1323 to A.D 1387. Now, according to Mr. Robert Sewell's Chronological Tables the cyclic year Vikāri, mentioned in our inscription, fell in A.D. 1359. It is, therefore, not unreasonable to suppose that our inscription was dated in A.D. 1359-60.

"The inscription says that the temple of Narasinhanātha was built by Vejāladeva, but we are aware of many instances of kings and chiefs speaking of themselves as having erected temples when they merely reconstructed them or some parts of them, so that it is by no means certain whether Vejāladeva actually built, or simply rebuilt, the temple, or, what is highly probable, the *jagmohan*, which, as it stands, is doubtless a modern reconstruction.

"From the architectural point of view, our temple has to be assigned to approximately the same period when the celebrated Black Pagoda at Konārak was built. The walls and spire of the shrines of both the temples bear a remarkably close resemblance in style to each other. Perhaps some slight difference may be perceived with regard to the *amalaka* and finial of the spire, which are not so marked and distinct in outline as those of the temple at Konārak; but we have to remember

that the temple of Narasinhanātha is white-washed every third year, and, in fact, it was so being white-washed when I visited it. The difference that is discernible has thus been caused by thick coatings of plaster that must have been carried on for years. It is only with respect to their *jagmohans* that any difference worth calling such may be noticed, but the hall of the temple of Narasinhanātha, as stated above, has undergone repairs and restoration, and cannot thus be expected to be in its original form. Our temple is, no doubt, somewhat less elaborately carved than the Black Pagoda, but it by no means shows any deterioration of style, and it may, on account of its very lack of the exuberance of detail, be slightly earlier in age.

"The Black Pagoda is popularly believed to have been built by King Narasinhadeva I., and the published copper-plates of the Ganga Kings also tell us that he built a temple to the Sun at Konākona. Even supposing that Konākona is Konārak, it does not follow that the temple was erected so late as the middle of the thirteenth century, when Narasinhadeva I. flourished. The practice of kings taking credit for building new temples, when they merely restored, rebuilt or repaired those existing in their time, is too common to require any new illustration. From a strictly architectural point, the construction of the Black Pagoda has been ascribed by Fergusson to the latter half of the ninth century, and our temple, which corresponds to it in style, cannot be of a later period. The deeply and artistically sculptured doors of the *jagmohan*, and especially the carving of the Gangā and Yamunā at the bottom of one of them, which are met with only in very early temples, are alone sufficient to show that our temple could not have been constructed later than the ninth century. The inscription then informs us that the temple itself or, more accurately, the *jagmohan*, was rebuilt afterwards, in A.D. 1359-60, by Vejāladeva."

To this interesting description it may be added that it is now generally agreed that the Konārak temple was erected in the 13th century A.D. If, therefore, the resemblance of architecture is to be relied upon, the Narsinghnāth temple was built in the same century. Whatever may be its date, it is one of the most picturesque places in the district, for the hill behind the shrine rises to a height of 3,234 feet, and down it tumbles a cascade or waterfall called the Sahasra Dhāra or thousand streams.

Padampur.—See Borāsāmbar.

Pahārsirgirā.—A zamīndāri in the east of the Bargarh subdivision, with an area of 17 square miles. Population (1901) 1,843. The zamīndārs are Gonds of the same stock as the

zamīndārs of Bheran and Pātkulandā, the tradition being that the family originally came from Mandlā, some 700 years ago, and settled at Pātkulandā. The *takoli* fixed for the estate is Rs. 1,200, and the net income is Rs. 2,439.

Pātkulānda.—A zamīndāri in the Bargarh subdivision, extending over six square miles. Population (1901) 1,279. The zamīndār is Gond by a caste. The *takoli* of the estate is Rs. 300, and the net income of the zamīndāri is Rs. 351.

Rājpur.—A zamīndāri in the north of the Sambalpur subdivision, extending over 36 square miles. Population (1901) 5,030. It is said to have been created by Madhukar Sāi, the fourth Rājā of Sambalpur, in favour of one of his sons; and the zamīndārs are Chauhān Rājputs. The *takoli* of the estate is Rs. 600, and the net income of the zamīndār is Rs. 2,003. The present zamīndār, Madhukar Sāi, exercises second-class magisterial powers. There are a primary school and branch post office at the headquarters, Rājpur.

Rāmpelā.—A village situated about 14 miles north of Sambalpur. This is the biggest village in the Sambalpur subdivision, the population at the census of 1901 being 4,658, consisting largely of Jharuā Brāhmans, weavers and braziers (Kansāris). It is also one of the centres of the weaving industry, *sāris* and *dhotis* of good quality being made by the Bhuliās. There are an Anglo-Vernacular Middle school, to which is attached a boarding-house with accommodation for about 40 boys, a Guru-training school, a girls' school and a police outpost. A road maintained by the District Council connects the village with the Rengāli railway station.

Rāmpur.—A zamīndāri in the Sambalpur subdivision, extending over 149 square miles, of which 23 square miles are under forest. Population (1901) 18,860. It was created in the reign of Chhatra Sāi in 1634, by whom it was conferred on a Rājput named Prān Nāth, a scion of the royal house. In the time of Rājā Nārāyan Singh, several of the relations of the zamīndār were murdered by Surendra Sāi and Udwant Sāi, who for this offence were sentenced to imprisonment for life. The *takoli* of the estate is Rs. 2,000, and the income of the zamīndār is Rs. 4,621. The headquarters are at Rāmpur, about 25 miles north-west of Sambalpur, which contains a police outpost.

Sambalpur.—Principal town and headquarters of the district, situated in 21° 28′ N. and 83° 58′ E. It is the terminus of a branch line of the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway, 30 miles long, which connects it with the Jharsagurā junction, and with the main line to Calcutta, from which place it is 349 miles distant. The

railway station is $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the town and $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the civil station. The population of the town in 1901 was 12,870, as compared with 14,571 in 1891; but the decrease is due to the fact that certain villages adjoining Sambalpur, which were included in the town at the census of 1891, were excluded from it at the last census. Excluding those villages, the population increased by more than 30 per cent. in the decade.

The town lies along the left or north-eastern bank of the Mahānadī, and is very picturesquely situated. The view is especially fine in September, when, from such point as the circuit-house hill overlooking the river, fields heavy with irrigated rice can be seen stretching away for miles together, while in the background wooded hills fringe the horizon, seeming in the clear atmosphere of this season to be less than half their real distance away. In the foreground is the Mahānadī, which is nearly a mile broad. During the rains it is often full from bank to bank, and on one or two occasions it has been known to overflow its banks and submerge part of the town. When the monsoon is over, it falls rapidly, and during the greater part of the year there is only a small stream some forty or fifty yards wide. Opposite the town the river bed is studded with rocks, which are a serious obstacle to navigation. The banks are well wooded with numerous groves of mango and other trees. During the open season a pontoon bridge is maintained by the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway, giving place to a ferry during the rains.

Sambalpur derives its name from the goddess Samlāi Devī, its tutelary deity, who was installed here by Balrām Deva, the founder of the town and first Rājā of Sambalpur. Legend relates that Balrām Deva, who had been given a grant of this part of the country by his brother, the Rājā of Pātnā, established himself at a place called Chaurpur on the northern bank of the Mahānadī. One day while hunting, he crossed the river, and set his hounds at a hare, only to find after a long chase that they had been repulsed by it. Struck by this extraordinary exhibition of courage by the most timid of animals, he concluded that there must be some supernatural virtue in the land. He therefore determined to make his capital there, and having built a town, installed in it the tutelary goddess of his family. The place where her image was set up was an island (*kud*) on which stood a cotton tree, and hence was called Semal-kud, while the goddess was given the name of Samlāi. Local tradition asserts that the place where the Rājā's dogs were repulsed by the hare is a spot, known as Badirāj, in front of the old city police station near the Bālibandha tank, and that the old town founded by

Balrām Deva was between the city police-station and Samlāi Devī's temple.

The goddess is now enshrined in a temple called Samlāi Gudi, said to have been erected by Chhatra Sāi, the seventh Rājā of Sambalpur. The image of Samlāi is a large block of stone, in the middle of which is a projection with a narrow groove regarded as the mouth. On both sides of this are depressions covered with beaten gold leaf to represent the eyes. The temple itself is a square building standing on a high plinth and surmounted by a spire. It has a verandah on each side and four domes at the corners, and is built of stone cemented with mortar. Another temple, known as the temple of Bara Jagannāth, which is within the Gopāljī Math, is said to have been erected by Bansī Gopāl, a son of Balabhadra Sāi, third Rājā of Sambalpur, when he embraced Vaishnavism. It is believed to have been the first Vaishnava temple constructed in the Sambalpur district, in which old Vaishnava temples are comparatively rare.

A third temple, called the Brahmapurā temple, because it is situated in Brahmapurā, the Brāhman quarter, is of great sanctity, many civil suits being decided by the oaths of parties taken at it. The temple is a small one, but it has a large hall in front with a roof consisting of nine hemispherical vaults. The door-frame of the temple is made of a reddish-coloured marble, and on the architrave is carved an image of Krishna sitting upon a lotus and playing a flute. On the right jamb of the door there are nine images carved, and inside the nine domes are more carvings believed to represent the nine *avatāras* of Vishnu, the tenth being represented by Krishna himself over the doorway. Inside the temple are images of Jagannāth, Balabhadra and Subhadrā carved in wood. Of the other temples in the town the only ones calling for mention are those of Pātneswarī Devī and Ananta Sajyā, built like the Bara Jagannāth temple between 1500 and 1600 A.D. They are of uniform design, and not remarkable for beauty of architecture or solidity of structure.

Historically, the old fort to the north-west of the town is more interesting. This is said to have been built in the beginning of the 18th century by Rājā Ajit Singh, who was naturally induced by the raids of the Marāthās to fortify the portion of the town in which his palace stood. He therefore excavated a moat round the palace, the two ends of which joined the Mahānadī, one at the side on which the city police-station stands, and the other to the west of Samlāi Gudi. All round the palace thorny bamboos were planted to form a barrier against invaders, and the bank of the Mahānadī from the Mohan Darwāzā to the

Samlāi Gudi, a length of 2,443 feet, was defended by a stone wall. Towers or bastions with embrasures for guns were erected at intervals on the wall. They were 18 feet high and 72 feet in circumference, and were faced with stone 3 feet thick and filled in with earth. Nothing now remains of the fort but the crumbling stone wall on the river face and a few mouldering bastions. One gateway only is left, that of Samlāi near the temple of the goddess, and though the remains of the moat are still visible. it is filled up here and there.

Sambalpur is divided into two portions. The station, which contains the public offices and courts, and the houses of the civil officers, is pleasantly situated on the bank of the Mahānadī, to the south and a little to the east of the native town. The latter is also on the river bank and, including the suburbs, is about 2 miles long by a quarter of a mile broad. It includes a large suburb called Bara Bazar, which is separated from the town proper by the area comprised within the old fort walls. This bazar was formerly a mere marketplace, but gradually attracted settlers as the town became larger, and is now chiefly inhabited by goldsmiths, weavers, boatmen and fishermen. Besides the Government offices, civil and criminal courts, there are a jail, dispensary, circuit-house, dāk bungalow, cooly depôts, a covered market, a *sarai* near the town, and another on the opposite side of the river. The Baptist Mission has a station here, and usually two missionaries reside in the town. Sambalpur is also the headquarters of the Political Agent of the Orissa Feudatory States and Tributary Mahāls.

Among other modern buildings may be mentioned the town hall, called the Victoria Memorial District Hall, which was erected from subscriptions raised to commemorate the reign of Queen Victoria, the building being opened in 1904. A veterinary dispensary has also been established, which is maintained by the District Council and Municipality. The educational institutions include a high school with a boarding-house attached, a girls' school and six primary schools. Of the six primary schools, four teach Oriyā, one Hindī and one Urdū. The Hindī school is maintained by Government, and the Urdū school by a fixed annual grant from the Municipality and by private subscriptions. The four Oriyā schools are maintained by the Municipality. A printing press with English and Oriyā type was established in 1903 to commemorate the restoration of Oriyā as the language of the courts. This press and a library constructed about the same time are known as the Fraser Printing Press and Fraser Library, respectively, after Sir Andrew Fraser,

formerly Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces and late Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. The town also contains a leper asylum, which is maintained by private subscriptions and from the rent of a bungalow left for this purpose by Mr. Goodridge. A fund, controlled by five trustees, has been established for feeding pilgrims, one Kāsī Nāth, a Hospital Assistant, having left Rs. 20,000, the interest on which was to be devoted to feeding beggars and pilgrims on the way to Jagannāth. Every pilgrim gets a full day's food, and every beggar relieved gets a handful. A wing of a native regiment was stationed here till 1902.

The river Mahānadī is the main source of the water-supply of the town, and, in addition to this, there are some selected tanks and wells reserved for drinking purposes. An off-shoot from the main stream of the Mahānadī is led through the sand after the manner of a canal, so that water can always be obtained near the bank on which the town is situated. At present, however, the flow of water is obstructed by some huge rocks near the Victoria Ghāt.

Sambalpur Subdivision.—Eastern subdivision of the district, extending over an area of 1,599 square miles. It is bounded on the north by the Gāngpur Feudatory State, on the north-east and east by the Bāmra State, on the south-east by the Rairākhol State, on the south by the Rairākhol and Sonpur States, on the south-west and west by the Bargarh subdivision, and on the north-west by the Padampur zamīndāri. With the exception of a small group of villages lying along the western bank of the Mahānadī, the whole subdivision lies to the north and east of that river. Most of the subdivision is under cultivation, but there are a number of rocky hills and ranges, and a considerable area is under forest. The principal forests are included in the Gichimora block to the north-east, and in a large straggling area in the hills to the south, which forms a kind of boundary between the *khālsa* area and the Tāmpargarh estate and the Loisingh zamīndāri. The *khālsa* extends over 743 square miles, and there are 7 zamīndāris, viz., Kolābirā, Rāmpur, Lairā, Rājpur, Kodābagā, Loisingh and Machidā. For administrative purposes the subdivision is divided into 4 thānas, viz., Sambalpur, Jharsagurā, Sāhāspur and Baghrā. The population in 1901 was 274,051, and the density of population was 171 persons to the square mile.

Sāsan.—A village in the Sambalpur subdivision, situated 8 miles north of Sambalpur; there is a railway station of the same name in the village of Rānīkhindā. It contains a police outpost and a temple dedicated to Gopīnāth, which was built in the 18th century during the reign of Ajit Singh, but became dilapidated

and was subsequently repaired by one Hari Guru with subscriptions raised by the Brāhmans. This village and the adjoining villages were, as the name shows, a *sāsan* grant, and are *muāfi mālguzāri* villages.

The term *sāsan* is an old one dating back to the time when Brāhmans enjoyed the patronage of ruling Rājās. They were given numerous grants of villages rent-free, and the central portions of such villages were marked out for the exclusive residence of Brāhman families devoted to the practice of religious rites or the cultivation of Sanskrit learning. A typical *sāsan*, as the Brāhman portion of the village was called, had a road, some ten feet broad, running through it, lined on each side by coconut groves, behind which were the residences of the Brāhman families descended from the original grantees.

Sohelā.—A village in the Bargarh *tahsīl*, situated 15 miles west of Bargarh. Population (1901) 1,597. The village is on the Raipur-Sambalpur road and is one of the chief trade centres in the Bargarh *tahsīl*. Some Cutchī and Mārwāri merchants have established shops here and purchase grain in large quantities for export. The village contains a *sarai*, said to be the best of the District Council *sarais* in the district, a post-office, police-station, and Primary school.

Uttal-Baisi.—See Bijepur.

Uttartīr.—See Dakshintīr.

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